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Jay Blades 'They said I wouldn't amount to anything'

Interview G2

Zoe Williams I can't *wait* for you to get back to work

G2

The Guardian

Monday
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Ministers have 'lost control' of virus spread, say experts

Ian Sample
Jessica Elgot
Helen Pidd

The UK recorded a massive rise in the number of people testing positive for Covid-19 yesterday, amid concerns the government has lost control of the pandemic just as people return to work and universities prepare to reopen.

Labour demanded that the health secretary, Matt Hancock, give an urgent statement to the House of Commons to explain the surge in cases and why some people were still being told to drive hundreds of miles for a test.

Almost 3,000 people in the UK tested positive for the virus yesterday – a 50% increase in a single day and the highest daily total since May. "They've lost control of the virus," said Prof Gabriel Scally, former NHS regional director of public health for the south-west. "It's no longer small outbreaks they can stamp on.

"It's become endemic in our poorest communities and this is the result. It's extraordinarily worrying when schools are opening and universities are going to be going back."

As seen in other countries opening up after lockdown, the majority of new cases appear to be in younger people who typically have milder infections than those over 50. The number of people needing hospital treatment has remained steady, but these lag behind new cases by about two weeks.

> *'It's no longer small outbreaks. It's become endemic in our poorest [areas]'*
>
> **Prof Gabriel Scally**
> *Ex-NHS public health director*

Public Health England reported 2,576 new cases yesterday and 2,988 for the UK overall. "It's a massive jump," said Christina Pagel, professor of operational research at UCL. "There is no way you can look at these figures and feel confident that things are going in the right direction."

There are concerns that testing centres cannot cope with demand. Many people seeking tests in recent days have been told to take round trips of more than 100 miles because of a lack of capacity near home.

Andy Burnham, mayor of Greater Manchester, said many people had contacted him

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Suspect at large after 'random' Midlands stabbings

Alexandra Topping
Vikram Dodd
Helen Pidd

West Midlands police have released CCTV images of a man they are seeking after a series of stabbings in Birmingham city centre left one man dead and seven people injured, two seriously.

The attacker responsible for the stabbings – which happened in four different areas over a two-hour period in the early hours of Sunday morning – was still at large, police confirmed.

Officers declared a major incident after being called to reports of a stabbing at about 12.30am on Sunday, with "a number of other stabbings" happening between 12.30am and 2.20am.

On Sunday evening, Ch Supt Steve Graham, of West Midlands police, said: "We have worked throughout the day to trawl CCTV footage and speak to witnesses to ensure we release the best possible video and image of the man we want to speak to.

"At this stage we believe that the attacks were random and we have no indication of a motive. I would urge people to remain

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▲ *Police forensic officers in Birmingham city centre after the stabbings early on Sunday morning* PHOTOGRAPH: JACOB KING/PA

PM: Brexit deal in five weeks or Britain will move on

Jessica Elgot
Lisa O'Carroll
Jennifer Rankin

The UK and Europe must agree a post-Brexit trade deal within five weeks or Britain will walk away for good, Boris Johnson will warn today.

In a significant escalation of pressure, the prime minister's ultimatum comes as relations between the sides seem poorer than ever, with many in Europe resigned to the likelihood of no deal.

Figures close to the negotiations have warned that EU leaders and heads of state must intervene before the end of the month to save the talks from collapse.

Johnson will set a deadline of 15 October – the date of the European council – for a deal to be signed, with the mood bleak as formal talks resume this week between Britain's lead negotiator, David Frost, and the EU's Michel Barnier.

If the deadline is not met, Britain will "move on" and accept that a deal cannot be struck, Johnson will say, adding that no deal

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News

▼ *Commuters arrive at Waterloo station last week. The government wants more workers back in offices*
PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA JONES/PA

Trains restored to 90% of normal to aid work return

Gwyn Topham

Train operators restored more services this morning as the government sought to encourage Britain's office workers back to their desks.

About 90% of the usual schedule is now operating after the timetable change, and up to 98% of pre-pandemic commuter services in the south-east, though some of the remaining suspended train services are now unlikely to come back until December.

While social distancing requirements mean trains can only safely carry around half of their usual capacity, there will also be additional carriages on some peak trains to allow more people to travel – particularly on routes serving schools, with more schools in England and Wales reopening this week.

Robert Nisbet, a director at the Rail Delivery Group, which represents train operators, said: "Rail companies are boosting services to help people feel confident getting back to workplaces and supporting the economic recovery in city centres.

"Some train times will change so we're asking people to check before they travel and plan their journeys for quieter times if possible."

The passenger watchdog, Transport Focus, welcomed the expansion of services. Anthony Smith, its chief executive, said: "The rail industry must focus on maintaining good performance so that passengers can travel with confidence. Disruption and any crowding from this will be especially unwelcome."

Schedules have returned to around 80% of normal levels in recent weeks, after being slashed during lockdown under emergency measures. Train operators have performed better while focusing on key services, but trade unions demanded that full timetables be restored, amid concerns that schedules could end up being reduced permanently.

98%
Level at which rail services are running in the south-east compared with pre-pandemic levels

0.01%
The risk of catching Covid-19 on an average rail journey, according to the Rail Safety & Standards Board

The RMT's senior assistant general secretary, Mick Lynch, said that cutting 10% of services through autumn was "a retrograde and damaging step, that flies in the face of the government plans to get Britain back to work", and would be seen by the union as "a hostile act that could usher in further and deeper cuts down the line"

He warned that: "Any moves towards transport austerity with the purpose of slashing services, jobs and conditions will be vehemently opposed by RMT every step of the way."

The government said that suggestions it would agree to fewer services long-term were "inaccurate and untrue". A Department for Transport spokesperson said: "We have asked operators to increase service levels ahead of schools returning in September, ensuring current excellent reliability levels are maintained while providing more space for social distancing and extra capacity for the future.

"With passengers returning as the economy restarts, our intervention means the railway is ready and able to support the national recovery from Covid."

Passenger numbers remained just under a third of normal levels at the start of September, according to DfT figures.

Face masks remain mandatory on trains and stations, and a recent study by the Rail Safety and Standards Board found that the risk of catching Covid-19 is less than 0.01% on an average journey.

The industry is understood to feel frustrated by the wait for an unequivocal endorsement of trains' safety from the government, as well as changes to ticketing. With many people now no longer travelling to work regularly enough to benefit from season tickets, the cost of a daily return at peak times is seen as a deterrent to occasional commutes.

Boy racers and novice cyclists blamed for rise in Manchester road accidents

Helen Pidd
North of England editor

Road deaths in one of Britain's biggest police force areas have increased by 42% this year despite a substantial drop in traffic during lockdown, with a senior officer blaming boy racers driving high-speed leased cars, often high on drink or drugs.

Cycling organisations and lawyers representing injured cyclists report a similar picture nationally, with one law firm saying cycling cases were up 45% year-on-year.

Six cyclists and 16 pedestrians have been killed on Greater Manchester's roads this year, compared with three and 13 in the same period last year, according to Greater Manchester police (GMP). Driver deaths have increased from six to 13, and passenger deaths from one to four. In total, 44 people have died in road accidents in the region this year, up from 31 last year – an increase of 42%.

Matt Bailey-Smith, the chief inspector of specialist operations at GMP, said many accidents involved young men who had leased "high-end" cars, often Audis and BMWs, which they race against each other.

"We are working hard with these leasing companies to cancel policies and have vehicles removed when they are being irresponsibly used or effectively sublet to friends," he said. "A lot of the focus seems to be around Audis, in particular the S models, the S3, S4, RS models, which are very high-powered vehicles." An Audi S4 costs from £50,200 to buy new but can be leased for around £540 a month.

Children are among those who have been killed in Greater Manchester this year. On 23 July, Safiullah Asif, eight, was killed by a BMW while crossing the road in Ashton-under-Lyne. Six-year-old Kidus Wondwosen died after being hit by a car while he was riding his bike near Hulme, just outside Manchester city centre.

In Greater Manchester, about 115,000 trips are made by bike each day, according to Transport for Greater Manchester, up from 100,300 daily pre-lockdown. During the peak of lockdown (29 March) there were 1.034m car trips on the region's roads, down from 5.082m on 9 March.

Nadia Kerr, the head of cycling claims at JMW solicitors, said: "We are seeing a greater volume of inquiries from people who are new to cycling, people giving it a try and perhaps don't really know how to cycle safely, where to position themselves on the road. It would be a huge shame if these people are put off cycling because we know how good it is from a wellbeing and environmental perspective."

A spokeswoman for the Department for Transport said: "We want to keep every road user safe, particularly vulnerable ones. The Gear Change cycling and walking plan launched by the prime minister in July sets a vision for safer streets where nobody is afraid to cycle."

▼ An image from Michael Cohen's book Disloyal: A Memoir shows Donald Trump with a Barack Obama lookalike hired to take part in a video

'Hatred and contempt': book says Trump hired a 'faux-Bama' to fire on video

Kenya Evelyn
Washington

Donald Trump has worked tirelessly to undo much of his predecessor's legacy, but now, with an election looming, the president faces new questions about his obsession with Barack Obama.

A new book by his former lawyer, Michael Cohen, details how Trump reportedly filmed a skit featuring an Obama lookalike whom the future president ostentatiously criticised and then "fired".

The clip – which shows Trump in Trump Tower facing an unnamed black man across a desk – is thought to have been filmed for possible inclusion in the 2012 Republican convention, when Mitt Romney was nominated for president, and never shown.

"Trump hired a 'faux-Bama' to participate in a video in which Trump 'ritualistically belittled the first black president and then fired him'," CNN reported after it and other news organisations obtained a pre-publication copy of Cohen's book, Disloyal: The True Story of the Former Personal Attorney to President Donald J Trump.

CNN also published a picture it said was from the book of Trump and the Obama lookalike.

Cohen's book details other slights against Obama, for whom Trump had "hatred and contempt", according to his former fixer. Obama only got into Columbia University and Harvard Law School because of "fucking affirmative action", Cohen quotes Trump as saying.

According to the Washington Post, Cohen alleges Trump has a "low opinion of all black folks", and quotes him saying: "Tell me one country run by a black person that isn't a shithole. They are all complete fucking toilets."

Trump also reportedly praised apartheid-era South Africa, saying: "Mandela fucked the whole country up. Now it's a shithole. Fuck Mandela. He was no leader."

> ***'I was the canary in the coal mine for the millions of Americans who are still mesmerised by the power of Trump'***
>
> **Michae Cohen**
> *Former Trump lawyer*

Cohen writes that Trump's three oldest children came to his office after Trump's acerbic and racist campaign announcement in 2015, asking him to convince their father to drop out of the race because of the damage his rhetoric would do to the company.

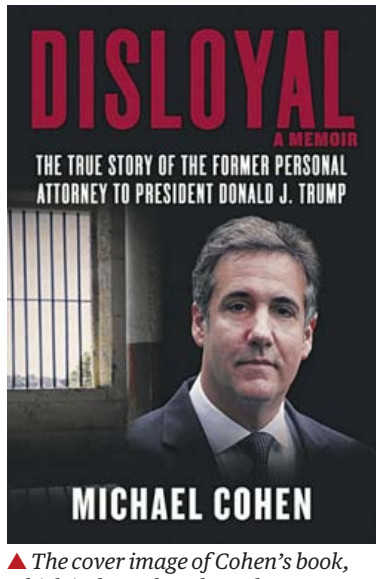
"MC, you've got to get dad to stop the campaign. It's killing the company," Cohen quotes Ivanka as saying.

Cohen says Trump was unconcerned about harm to his businesses. "Plus, I will never get the Hispanic vote," he said, according to Cohen. "Like the blacks, they're too stupid to vote for Trump. They're not my people." Americans of colour overwhelming opposed Trump in 2016.

Cohen is serving three years after pleading guilty to campaign finance violations and other crimes, including lying to Congress. The book, released tomorrow, is styled as a tell-all memoir that makes the case that Trump landed him in prison, offering a detailed account of the then-reality TV star's alleged role in a hush money scandal during his campaign for president.

The White House called the memoir "fan fiction". "Cohen is a disgraced felon and disbarred lawyer, who lied to Congress. He had lost all credibility," said the press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany. "He readily admits to lying routinely but expects people to believe him now so that he can make money from book sales," said a White House spokesman, Brian Morgenstern. "It's unfortunate that the media is exploiting this sad and desperate man to attack President Trump."

In the book, Cohen tries to minimise his own wrongdoing, characterising himself as a "star witness" to a hush-money conspiracy that still could culminate in charges for Trump after he leaves office. The book is a "fundamental piece of evidence" the guilt of an "organized crime don" and "master manipulator", he writes.



▲ The cover image of Cohen's book, which is due to be released tomorrow

Cohen quotes Trump as explaining his reasoning for approving a $130,000 payment to silence the porn star Stormy Daniels – with whom he had an affair – before the 2016 election.

"If it comes out, I'm not sure how it would play with my supporters," Trump said, according to Cohen. "But I bet they'd think it's cool that I slept with a porn star." He would "have to pay" his wife a far greater sum if his affair ever became known, he added.

On Russia, the Post reported that Cohen put Trump's admiration of President Vladimir Putin simply down to his love of money, saying he wrongly identified Putin as "the richest man in the world by a multiple".

But despite his litany of criticisms and allegations, Cohen's attachment to the president has evidently not been completely snuffed out.

"I care for Donald Trump, even to this day," Cohen writes, "and I had and still have a lot of affection for him."

He adds: "I was the canary in the coal mine for the millions of Americans who are still mesmerized by the power of Trump."

Cohen has led a publicity blitz around his memoir even as he serves his sentence in home confinement. A federal judge ruled this summer that authorities had retaliated against him – sending him back to prison after he had been furloughed because of the coronavirus pandemic – for publishing the book before the November election.

He was released to home confinement in July and the government lifted a ban on him speaking publicly.

Brexit talks on the brink as PM overrides withdrawal agreement

Continued *from page 1*

that a deal could still be reached. "As a responsible government, we are considering fall-back options in the event this is not achieved, to ensure the communities of Northern Ireland are protected."

Key figures close to the negotiations have already warned that EU leaders and heads of state must intervene before the end of the month to save the talks from collapse.

Today, the prime minister will set a firm deadline of 15 October – the date of the European council – for a deal to be signed, with the mood bleak as formal talks resume this week between the UK's lead negotiator, David Frost, and the EU's Michel Barnier.

If no agreement is reached before the deadline, the UK will "move on" and accept that a deal cannot be struck, Johnson will say, adding that no deal would be a "good outcome".

He will strike a belligerent tone, suggesting there will be no movement from the deadline and claiming the UK is ready to trade on World Trade Organization terms from January. "There is no sense in thinking about timelines that go beyond that point," he will say. "If we can't agree by then, then I do not see that there will be a free trade agreement between us, and we should both accept that and move on."

Johnson and his allies have repeatedly said they did not believe earlier negotiations made the threat of no deal tangible enough.

EU officials had previously said the deadline would be the end of October. Sources close to the talks have suggested fresh faces and interventions by member states are now needed to break the impasse.

Raoul Ruparel, one of the leading advisers in Theresa May's Brexit negotiating team, suggested the dynamics needed to change. "It is just Frost and Barnier and the same teams in talks; you've got two immovable objects sitting down again and you are not going to see great movement coming from that," he said.

"There needs to be some change, some sort of fresh input, political input … If we come to the end of the year and we don't have a deal between two close allies, that would look ridiculous, but with the two sides entrenched, where the mechanism is for unlocking the talks is not obvious."

Johnson will characterise the result of no deal as "a trading arrangement with the EU like Australia's", saying the UK would have full control of its laws and fishing waters and would "prosper mightily as a result".

He will say the UK would find "sensible accommodations on practical issues such as flights, lorry transport, or scientific cooperation, if the EU wants to do that".

Industry leaders have previously said no deal would spell disaster for the country, with tariffs imposed on goods overnight sending costs for industry and consumers soaring.

Last week an LSE economics professor, Thomas Sampson, said no deal could cost more than the economic shock of Covid, causing a £3.3tn decline in the value of the UK's output.

Johnson will say negotiators will continue to work hard to try to close a deal. "Even at this late stage, if the EU are ready to rethink their current positions and agree this, I will be delighted. But we cannot and will not compromise on the fundamentals of what it means to be an independent country to get it."

There are worries that European leaders, preoccupied with the Covid-19 recovery plan and foreign policy crises in Belarus and the eastern Mediterranean, appear to have no appetite to intervene in Brexit talks for now.

There remain three stumbling blocks: state aid, fisheries and governance. The EU has protested that the UK is refusing to put forward proposals, while the UK is accusing Barnier of trying to force it to cut a deal on the "difficult" areas first and failing to engage on easier challenges.

While some national capitals favour a tougher negotiating stance than the one being pursued by Barnier, they appear content to leave the talks in his hands, fuelling fears that there will be no deal if back channels are not created to test new ideas in confidence.

One government source said member state engagement had been minimal, but more direct approaches with EU leaders could be imminent.

"Our broad view has been that will come in the next few weeks," they said. "The nature of these negotiations is that bigger players will start to get involved when we reach the final stages."

A last-minute political intervention would be high-risk, say EU sources. "Ursula von der Leyen isn't as interested in Brexit as [Jean-Claude] Juncker was," a source said, referring to the European commission president and her predecessor. "You get the impression she just wants to move on and the same for any member states."

Fishing

Echoes of 1970s entry negotiations in bitter row over catches

Jennifer Rankin
Brussels

◀ *A trawlerman in Fraserburgh in 2016*
PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD

▲ *The chief EU negotiator, Michel Barnier, says the UK must seek compromise*

Fishing has always been one of the biggest hurdles to a post-Brexit deal between the EU and UK. Now it is becoming one of the most bitter.

The EU's chief negotiator, Michel Barnier, accused the government last week of treating European fishermen as "a bargaining chip", while vowing there would be no trade deal without a "fair and sustainable" agreement on fishing.

Hitting back at Barnier's speech, a UK source said it was "a deliberate and misleading caricature of our proposals, aimed at deflecting scrutiny from the EU's own positions, which are wholly unrealistic and unprecedented".

The acrimony has echoes of the UK's negotiations over joining the European Economic Community 50 years ago, when the government was presented with a fait accompli on fishing. Only eight hours after accession talks had begun in June 1970, the British got an unwelcome surprise: the six EC members had agreed a common fisheries policy, speedily hammering out the deal that had eluded them for 12 years just as fish-rich Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Norway were knocking at the door.

"I think they knew quite well they had pulled a sharp one," Sir Richard Packer, a former British official, involved in entry negotiations in 1971-72, said. Fishing became one of the most poisonous issues of entry talks, leading British officials to doubt they would get enough votes in parliament to join the Common Market. (Norway rejected EEC entry over fishing).

> ***'If the French put Britain in a corner, it makes it harder for Berlin to defend. We need a compromise on our side'***
>
> **Senior EU diplomat**
> *Brussels*

"The question of fisheries was economic peanuts, but political dynamite," wrote the late Sir Con O'Neill, the UK chief negotiator, in his account of the talks from 1972.

Half a century later, the 100 shared stocks of fish that swim in UK and EU waters are once again proving politically explosive. And British negotiators are finding that history is in the negotiating room, as well as politics and geography.

But the EU sees the past differently. The UK is once again labouring uphill to convince it to drop the tough negotiating mandate member states have written for Barnier on fish. Led by eight states that fish in British waters, the EU's opening position was that the UK should accept the status quo, meaning European boats can continue to fish a rich harvest.

More than half (58%) of the fish and shellfish landed from the UK's 200-nautical mile exclusive economic zone by EU boats was caught by non-UK boats, according to a 2016 report from the University of the Highlands and Islands.

For Boris Johnson's government, Brexit means the status quo must go. British negotiators want bigger catches, based on where fish live, rather than the historic claims of foreign fishermen.

Speaking to the House of Lords in June, Barnier said he was willing to negotiate something "between those two extreme positions" [of the EU and UK] that "would take account" of the UK's preferred "zonal attachment" model. But the UK must compromise too, he said.

EU negotiators think a deal can be reached on fisheries, but after a fruitless summer of talks Barnier lamented that "the UK has not shown any willingness to seek compromises on fisheries".

Packer thinks the EU will have "to cave in", saying: "If everything should carry on in relation to fishing, why should it not carry on in relation to financial markets?"

For now, EU states are sticking to this line. "The mandate stays," one senior EU diplomat told the Guardian. But other member states think the EU is out on a limb. "If the French play harder and harder and put Britain in the corner, it makes it harder for Berlin to defend," said another senior diplomat. "I think we need a compromise on our side."

The two retired officials suggest the final compromise may not be a million nautical miles from one feature of the status quo: annual ministerial haggling over catch quotas. British ministers could be sparring in Brussels over cod and sprat quotas for years to come.

Care homes
Give families greater access, says Labour
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Rashford strikes back
Footballer rebukes MP over poverty
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▲ *A forensics officer gathers evidence in Irving Street. Below: a CCTV image of the man being sought by police*
PHOTOGRAPH: OLI SCARFF/AFP/GETTY

Police issue CCTV of man sought after knife attacks

Continued *from page 1*

vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to us. We are appealing for anyone who recognises the man in the footage to contact us urgently."

Officers said there were four separate stabbings, beginning in Constitution Hill just north of the city centre, before the attacker travelled south and struck again in Livery Street, Irving Street and Hurst Street. The attacks were being considered as a "linked series", said Graham, although the victims were unrelated.

Police said a 23-year-old man attacked in Irving Street suffered fatal injuries. A man and a woman, aged 19 and 32, suffered critical injuries, and five other people, aged between 23 and 33, were also injured. They were treated in hospital and so far two have been discharged.

Savvas Sfrantziz, 64, the manager of Mykonos, a bar and grill on Hurst Street, told the Guardian he thought he had witnessed one of the attacks.

"This was completely random and I have never seen such violence on Hurst Street," he said. Sfrantziz said he had heard noise outside and went to investigate, then saw a woman being stabbed repeatedly. He said the perpetrator did not seem to know her and seemed relaxed.

"I heard a lot of noise outside and went to investigate. I saw a young woman in her early 20s stabbed in the neck seven times. The perpetrator did not know her, and he seemed relaxed. He didn't care. People didn't go near him. I'm not sure if he was on drugs or if he was 100% there. He was not acting clever.

"It was very busy here. People were happy and enjoying themselves. There is hardly any violence in Hurst Street. It is usually the nearby bars of the Arcadian where fights break out regularly."

Graham said the events were "tragic, shocking and understandably frightening".

Officers were seen removing a black-handled kitchen knife from a drain, but Graham said it was too early to say whether the knife was connected to the murder inquiry.

Graham said there was "absolutely no suggestion" that the stabbings were terrorism-related. One of the incidents happened close to Birmingham's Gay Village, but Graham said there was also no evidence the stabbings were linked to hate crime.

Nathan Hudson, of West Midlands ambulance service, said 14 ambulances were sent to the city centre at about midnight. Hudson said the crews were used to dealing with stabbings, but there had been an added element of anxiety.

"We knew we had an attacker with a knife, going around randomly stabbing people," he said. "We had an ongoing incident and we didn't really know at what point that would end."

There was a heightened police presence in the city centre on Sunday, with significant sections of the affected areas cordoned off and forensics tents erected by police.

David Nash, bar manager at the Village Inn, the Nightingale Inn and the Loft Lounge, told PA Media he had come within 10 metres of a suspect spotted running from the scene of the stabbings in Hurst Street.

"I was on the street and we heard somebody shout down the street: 'Stop him, he's just stabbed somebody,'" he said, adding that the person was "calm" and walking unhurriedly, until the bystander shouted, at which point he started running.

The prime minister, Boris Johnson, tweeted his thanks to the emergency services: "All my thoughts are with those affected by the terrible incident in Birmingham last night."

Additional reporting **Rhi Storer**

'It's normalised'

Residents say violence has become a daily part of life

Rhi Storer

The streets of Birmingham were quiet on Sunday as residents, workers and shoppers talked of how violence has become "normalised". "This city has become unsafe," said Phil Paul, 45, from Shelby, who had travelled into the city for a drink as police hunted the man who went on a 90-minute stabbing spree yesterday.

"I am not surprised this has happened ... I've lived here all my life and it has got worse and worse. When incidents like this take place, it just feels like an average day."

A student, Ieuan Joy, 24, said the city was becoming dangerous, echoing claims from West Midlands ambulance service at a press conference yesterday that stabbings were "not a rare occurrence".

"People are used to it. It has become normalised," he said, remembering a particularly brutal stabbing at a chip shop near a club two years ago.

Around Hurst Street, an area known for its diverse bars, clubs and restaurants, police turned residents and workers away from one of a number of cordons across the city.

One man had been unable to reach his workplace at PureGym, inside the Arcadian shopping and entertainment centre. Like many locals, he said violence had become common. "I didn't imagine it would be this bad - stabbings happen unfortunately all the time - but it looks like it's worse than anything that's happened so far," he said, asking not to be named.

"Birmingham is dangerous now, especially the centre. I'm not really surprised. It's something that is basically happening on a daily basis, stabbings and other violent crime."

One worker at an LGBT bar described being locked in after the stabbings. "We heard helicopters and saw a lot of police vehicles. Soon across the Gay Village the shutters were pulled down and all of our staff had to stay inside for our own safety. We did not leave until 4:30 in the morning. We had to be escorted by management away from the scene."

Although initial reports claimed a hate crime had taken place, police said there was no evidence to suggest the stabbings targeted LGBT people. For many who were working at the time, the idea was worrying.

Covid-19 shows huge rise in UK as universities and offices start reopening

Continued *from page 1*

going back." As seen in other countries opening up after lockdown, the majority of new cases appear to be in younger people who typically have milder infections than those over 50. Public Health England reported 2,576 new cases yesterday and 2,988 for the UK overall. "It's a massive jump," said Christina Pagel, professor of operational research at UCL. "There is no way you can look at these figures and feel confident that things are going in the right direction."

There are concerns that testing centres cannot cope with demand. Many people seeking tests in recent days have been told to take round trips of more than 100 miles because of a lack of capacity near home.

Andy Burnham, mayor of Greater Manchester, said many people had contacted him in recent days saying they had been offered tests hundreds of miles away, such as in Leicester or Scotland. "The fact people are being directed to bizarre locations is yet another example of national test and trace not working. That's why it needs to be under local control.

"The danger is someone who is symptomatic in Greater Manchester, where many areas are still classed as high risk, tries to book a test, gets directed to Leicester and thinks 'sod that' then potentially passes on the virus. It is so obvious the system should always offer you a test at your local centre; it should keep you within your geography."

A government source said there was significant concern that the UK was "six weeks behind France", where the trajectory saw more young people infected then leading to increased hospitalisations of vulnerable groups.

Hancock said the rise was "concerning" but said workplaces should still be operating safely.

"The cases are predominantly among younger people, but we have seen in other countries across the world and in Europe this sort of rise ... lead to a rise across the population as a whole, so it is so important that people don't allow this illness to infect their grandparents and to lead to the sort of problems that we saw earlier in the year," he told Sky News.

Paul Hunter, a professor of medicine at the University of East Anglia, said while some of the new cases may be because of a catch-up from delayed tests over the past few days, it was still "a marked increase".

He said reports of long journeys for tests did not bode well for the autumn and winter, when cases are expected to rise. People driving around the UK would help to spread the disease, while focusing testing on hotspots risked missing new outbreaks, he said.

"It's got to be a better managed and better put-together system than the one we have now. If we're not coping now, it's going to be awful in two months' time when case numbers have doubled or quadrupled," Hunter said.

Jonathan Stoye, a virologist at the Francis Crick Institute in London, said his son had travelled 80 miles, from St Albans to Gatwick, to get a test. "It's ridiculous. If you want to get people back to work, you've got to get the testing system to work, or people won't go if they are being responsible."

It took Jackie Cawkwell, 59, an administrator in Nottingham, three days to be offered a test close to home. She started feeling unwell on Thursday with symptoms including nausea, diarrhoea and a temperature.

"When I tried to get a test on the Friday, it only gave me the option of going to Oldham, that's 57 miles away,' she said. "I tried three times and I was only given Oldham, and when you are feeling that poorly, it's just not feasible to do a 100-mile-plus round trip. I was despairing."

Labour is likely to ask for an urgent question today to force Hancock to explain the issues. The shadow health secretary, Jon Ashworth, said the increase in cases was "deeply concerning" and a stark reminder there was no room for complacency in tackling the spread of the virus. "This increase, combined with the ongoing testing fiasco and the poor performance of the contact tracing system, needs an explanation from ministers," he said.

A spokesperson for the Department of Health and Social Care said there was a "high demand" for tests, but that capacity was targeted at hotspots.

Additional reporting
Caroline Bannock

> ***'If you want to get people back to work, you have got to get the testing to work'***
>
> **Jonathan Stoye**
> *Virologist*

Winter pressures

Four in five hospital trusts may face dire bed shortage

Pamela Duncan and Ashley Kirk

More than 100 NHS trusts in England could be overwhelmed this winter if there is a second wave of coronavirus admissions, with figures suggesting dozens of trusts would have 10% fewer beds than needed.

The Guardian compared each trust's 2019/20 winter capacity against the number of beds they needed for Covid-19 patients in April, when an average of 16,000 beds were required per day, and May, by which time lockdown and distancing had reduced the number requiring admission.

The analysis, carried out with Edge Health, suggests that, if NHS England experienced April-levels of Covid-19 pressure on top of normal winter pressures, 107 of 132 trusts (81.1%) would have fewer beds than were available to them last winter, with 46 exceeding capacity by 110% or more.

But even if Covid pressures are closer to May's lower levels, 79 (59.8%) of trusts could reach capacity, with seven oversubscribed by at least 10%.

Six could be overwhelmed in either scenario, meaning some NHS hospitals would struggle to accommodate all patients needing admission.

The analysis excludes extra capacity provided through nightingale hospitals or the private sector owing to a lack of available data, and does not account for those who might have been reasonably expected to have been admitted with or without a Covid-19 diagnosis.

▲ *Staff at Wexham Park hospital join in for the final clap for NHS in July*

Chris Hopson, the chief executive of NHS Providers, said: "These figures illustrate the point that trust leaders have strongly made over each of the last five winters - that there is insufficient acute bed capacity, and community capacity, to deal with winter demand.

"That's not entirely surprising after a near decade of the longest and deepest funding squeeze in NHS history ... It's also unfortunate the government turned down an NHS request, in the last couple of months, to permanently increase acute bed capacity. This will increase risk this coming winter."

Niall Dickson, the chief executive of the NHS Confederation, which represents organisations across the healthcare sector, said: "The NHS faces a collision of pressures this winter and this feels very much like the calm before the storm."

George Batchelor, the co-founder of Edge Health, said: "As the NHS braces for a second wave of Covid-19 this winter it is critical that it does not again become a National Covid Service."

Responding to the analysis, an NHS England spokesman highlighted its third-phase Covid-19 plan, with commitments to keeping current staffing, beds and capacity this winter. He also highlighted an additional £3bn funding to allow for extra capacity to be acquired from the independent sector,

▲ *Patient care at the Royal Papworth. 'It's critical that the NHS doesn't again become a National Covid Service'* PHOTOGRAPH: NEIL HALL/GETTY

the provision of nightingale hospitals and the safe discharge of patients from NHS hospitals through to March 2021.

He said: "Over winter the NHS will flex hospital capacity and community services as needed, alongside a major winter flu immunisation campaign. While Covid inpatient numbers are currently low ... the success of these efforts will also depend on controlling the virus in the community, including through test and trace, rapid action to control local outbreaks, and continued public support for hand hygiene and social distancing measures."

The largest of the six trusts which would be overwhelmed, in either the modelled April or May scenarios, is King's College Hospital trust in London. It had an average of 1,444 (including adult critical care) beds last winter, with 1,427 occupied on average between December and February. This left the trust on average just 1.1% from full capacity on a winter day.

In April 442 beds of the hospital's beds were occupied by Covid-19 patients and 238 in May. If such numbers were to be replicated in a second wave on top of demand similar to last winter, the trust would exceed capacity by 29.4% based on April demand scenario and 15.3% on May demand.

Responding, a spokeswoman for the trust said: "Bed capacity management in a hospital setting is detailed and complex. These calculations over-simplify a much more nuanced picture."

She added: "We have been using sophisticated modelling to plan for winter, forecast for a potential second surge in coronavirus patients, and manage the expected number of emergency patients.

"Our capacity planning includes repurposing wards and other clinical areas; working in collaboration with partners across south-east London, as we did during the peak of the pandemic, to ensure patients receive appropriate care for their needs; and reducing inpatients' length of stay, including the repatriation of patients who have been referred to us for specialist care back to their local hospital."

Five other trusts would be at least 10% over capacity under either of the two scenarios: Walsall Healthcare, Countess of Chester Hospital, East Cheshire, Northampton General Hospital and Blackpool Teaching Hospitals.

In response to requests for comment, all five trusts said they had developed or were developing plans for any surge of patients in the winter, including additional equipment, staff and critical care beds and pointed to collaboration with nearby hospitals or the private sector and the management of patients in their own homes.

While trusts were not overwhelmed at the height of lockdown, this was at the cost of the cancellation of a large number of routine appointments, including scheduled operations and cancer referrals.

The impact on patients is still being felt: about 500,000 people are waiting six weeks or more for treatment. More than 1 million fewer patients underwent planned surgery in England in April, May and June.

About 30,000 to 40,000 could not start cancer treatment as hospitals discharged thousands of patients and suspended many of their usual services to concentrate on coronavirus.

Prof Neil Mortensen, the president of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, said: "To make sure that planned surgery doesn't come to a standstill again in the winter, when potentially we'll have a second wave to deal with on top of the usual winter pressures - we must prioritise the establishment of "Covid-light" facilities, where surgical patients can continue to be treated safely and separately from Covid-positive patients. Reliable rapid tests for staff and patients, sufficient stocks of PPE and the continued improvement of 'test and trace' are key to this."

The Guardian compared the number of beds occupied by coronavirus patients in both April and May to each trust's average bed capacity between 2 December 2019 to 1 March 2020.

The sample excludes a small number of trusts that were merged with other trusts in recent months and, as such, could not be analysed.

> ***'The government has turned down a permanent increase in acute bed capacity'***
>
> **Chris Hopson**
> *CEO of NHS Providers*

In numbers

107
The number of trusts out of 132 in England that could have fewer beds available than last winter

46
Number of trusts whose capacity would exceed 110% if there were April levels of Covid-19 admissions

16,000
The average number of beds that were required each day in April for coronavirus admissions in England

£3bn
The additional funding to help the NHS in England prepare for a potential second wave of Covid-19

Patient recovery
'Health problems may persist for months'

Patients hospitalised with Covid-19 still have lung damage, breathlessness and coughs weeks after being discharged, researchers have found.

The long and lingering effects of coronavirus on physical health is a growing topic of concern; even those who have experienced "mild" Covid have reported symptoms that continue for many weeks or even months after the initial infection has passed.

Now researchers in Austria have released the preliminary results of a study tracking the recovery of patients who were hospitalised with severe coronavirus infection.

The results reveal that six weeks after leaving hospital, 88% of patients still showed signs of lung damage in CT scans - such as patches resembling ground glass - while 47% of patients were experiencing breathlessness. At 12 weeks, these figures were 56% and 39% respectively.

"Covid-19 survivors have persisting lung impairment weeks after recovery," said Dr Sabine Sahanic of the University Clinic in Innsbruck, who is part of the team behind the work.

But the trajectory is towards recovery. "Over time a moderate improvement is detectable," she added, noting the results suggested that structured follow-up care for those who had suffered a severe infection was important.

The findings also suggest that while recovery from Covid can be a lengthy process, the disease does not appear to trigger an increase in lung scarring over time, according to the team.

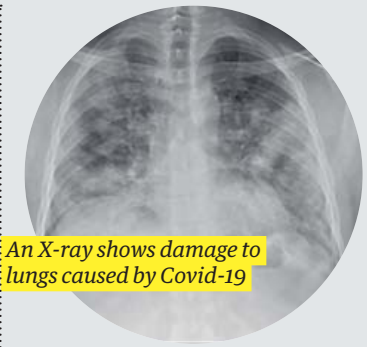
The research, which is to be presented at the European Respiratory Society international congress, followed the health of 86 coronavirus patients after their discharge from hospital. Eighteen of these patients had been in intensive care.

The average age of the patients was 61. More than 60% were male, almost 50% were current or former smokers, and 65% were overweight or obese.

Tests including scans, lung function measurements and clinical examinations were carried out twice: six weeks after discharge and again at 12 weeks.

The team found that persistent health problems were present in patients who had been in intensive care and those who had not.

Among other findings, lung volume available for breathing was less than 80% of what would be expected for an average person in 24 of the patients at six weeks, and 16 of the patients at 12 weeks. In addition, the team found signs of heart damage in a number of cases, although again these improved over time.



An X-ray shows damage to lungs caused by Covid-19

While lung damage at discharge was more severe among those who had been in intensive care, the team say these patients showed a similar rate of improvement in lung damage over time as those who had not been in intensive care.

The team were unable to rule out the possibility that patients may have had pre-existing lung problems, but they said the CT scans were typical of Covid-19, while improvements were seen in both the scans and lung function over time.

Sahanic noted that the long-term impact of Covid-19 was not necessarily a surprise, as previous research had shown that survivors of Sars, another coronavirus, also had long-lasting problems.

"[Of those who survived], 30% exhibited persistent structural lung abnormalities months after infection," she said.

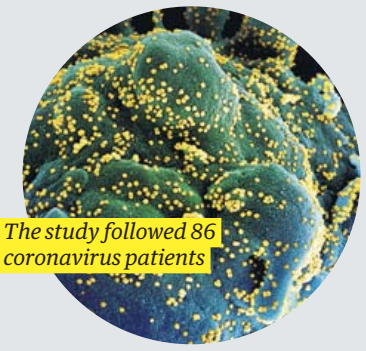
The study is ongoing: tests are also being carried out 24 weeks after discharge from hospital to further monitor the health of the survivors.

Tom Wilkinson, professor and consultant in respiratory medicine at the University of Southampton, who was not involved in the work, said: "There is increasing evidence that for many patients who suffer from Covid-19, there are long-term consequences for their health. These are likely to be more common in patients who experienced severe disease requiring hospitalisation and ventilation."

He added that a number of studies were under way to track such impacts and find the best ways to support recovery.

"The Austrian study reports short-term follow-up results in a hospitalised cohort, demonstrating there is ongoing evidence of both heart and lung impairment in a large proportion of patients at 12 weeks from discharge," he said.

"Whilst there will be patients who make a full recovery later than this, many may not, and this points to the need for better strategies to prevent and treat Covid-19." **Nicola Davis**



The study followed 86 coronavirus patients

Financial

Streaming wars

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Calls for care home visits to be stepped up amid fears for isolated residents

Peter Walker
Political correspondent

The Labour party and charities have called on ministers to take urgent action to help care homes in England receive more visitors, amid widespread warnings that isolation because of coronavirus is causing many residents to deteriorate rapidly.

The shadow social care minister, Liz Kendall, said the government should introduce more testing and protective equipment, while a charity that represents care residents and their families called for a wider re-evaluation of visiting rules.

"We need a better balance between protecting people from the virus and protecting their wellbeing, and thinking about what makes a good life," said Helen Wildbore, director of the Relatives and Residents Association. "People don't just want to survive, they want to live."

More than 16,000 people have died with Covid-19 in UK care homes, which were locked down for months to try to limit infection. Under rules in England updated in July, a single relative can make brief visits, often for around 30 minutes once a week, meeting outside where possible.

Wildbore said the government guidance "puts the onus on the managers of care homes to come up with a visiting policy, but it is confusing, lacks clarity, and it also lacks leadership".

A number of people have contacted the Guardian in recent weeks about the welfare of loved ones in care homes.

One was a woman in East Sussex whose 33-year-old son has the degenerative condition Huntington's disease. Before Covid he would have six hours of contact with her or other family members every day, now reduced to one brief visit a week.

The woman, who asked to not be named, said that while she did not blame the home, her son had deteriorated since being largely cut off from his family. "He can be on his own for several hours a day, apart from people checking on him to make sure he hasn't fallen out of his chair," she said. "It's not the care home's fault. They can't give love. He isn't their son."

The mother, who lives alone and self-isolates, said she had asked the home to allow her to come in as a volunteer, but was refused. She said: "The staff are not isolating. They go home to families, they go to Asda, they live normal lives.

"I have no idea how long my son has to live. The rest of the country is going about its daily life, and we're in limbo."

Another relative who contacted the Guardian was Sue Martin, whose father, Bob, 91, is in a care home in Milton Keynes. Martin saw her father last week for the first time, other than through a window, since March.

"I was really looking forward to it, but it was quite shocking," she said. "The visit was in their garden. He used to love being outside, but he was just blank. All the life had gone out of him."

Kendall said improvements to testing and PPE to help with care home visits had so far been "slow, patchy and inadequate". She said: "Care home residents need something to live for, not just to be kept alive."

Another Labour MP, Rachael Maskell, who has campaigned about care home standards, is warning that the lack of family access could also prove a risk in terms of conditions more broadly in care homes.

She said: "Families are inspectors. They notice when things are wrong. You also don't have the other health professionals visiting, like GPs. So you've created a closed environment. And the thing we've learned is that closed environments aren't safe environments."

Nadra Ahmed, the chair of the National Care Association, which represents many homes, said the sector faced a near-impossible situation: "They have to decide: how do you allow people into the service while ensuring that you safeguard everybody else?" One solution, she said, could be the government's proposal for mass tests with results in as little as 20 minutes.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokeswoman said: "We realise this is a very difficult time for families and care home residents. Our first priority must be to protect residents and staff by ensuring visits are carried out safely to prevent outbreaks.

"The latest figures show almost 60% of England's care homes have had no outbreak at all and the proportion of coronavirus deaths in care homes is lower in England than many other European countries."

'We need a balance between protection from the virus and thinking about what makes a good life'

Helen Wildbore
Relatives and Residents Association

Stranded Nine people were found drifting in the Channel yesterday after the outboard motor on their small inflatable boat failed. The migrants, who only had one life jacket between them, were rescued by the UK Border Force patrol vessel Hunter, which took them to Dover.

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY

Research raises new doubts about shared parental leave policy

Press Association

Shared parental leave was used by only 13,100 couples last year, according to new research.

The analysis suggests the uptake of the policy increased by 23% in the last financial year. According to figures from HM Revenue and Customs, 3,000 couples took shared parental leave in the year ending March 2016. The number has increased year on year, with 10,000 couples signing up in the year ending March 2019.

Yet even the most recent figures make up a small fraction compared with the nearly 650,000 women who claimed maternity pay in the same period. The research, by the law firm EMW, estimates only about 2% of couples have made use of the scheme.

With shared leave, eligible parents can split up to 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay after having a baby. This shared parental income is paid at a maximum of £151.20 a week, the same rate as statutory maternity pay.

However, with statutory maternity pay, new mothers are paid 90% of their salary for the first six weeks with no maximum limit.

To be eligible for shared parental leave, a new parent needs to meet certain criteria, including having been employed continuously by the same employer for at least 26 weeks.

Researchers suggest more promotion of the shared parental leave scheme may be needed, as well as increasing the level of pay. Encouraging more couples to take shared leave could lessen the financial impact of maternity on women, they say, allowing them to return to work earlier.

Jon Taylor of EMW said: "Despite the shared parental leave scheme being five years old, very few parents have been given a compelling reason to use it.

▲ *Only about 2% of couples may have made use of shared parental leave*

"It remains the case that men are more often the primary earners in a relationship. For many, seeing their pay cut to £150 a week is unpalatable, if not impossible, in the months after having a baby. If the government is serious about closing the gender pay gap, raising the level of statutory parental pay would be a great place to start."

Campaigners have argued that too few fathers know about their right to paternity leave and that, even when they are aware of the provision, many feel they cannot afford to take advantage. Commenting on the poor takeup and restrictions that mean many workers are not eligible, the Fatherhood Institute, a thinktank, called it "an inequitable and failed policy".

In 2018, the Government Equalities Office and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy ran a £1.5m campaign to promote awareness of shared leave, with a further campaign running last spring.

A spokesperson said: "The government is committed to making it easier for fathers to take paternity leave as set out in our manifesto. Shared parental leave gives parents the choice and flexibility to combine work and childcare in a way that suits them.

"We have consulted on how we can better balance the needs of mothers and fathers in parental leave and pay in the future and will respond in due course."

Pre-trial custody time limits to be extended amid big case backlog

Jamie Grierson

Unconvicted defendants awaiting trial in prison may be facing longer stints behind bars in England and Wales, as ministers plan to increase custody time limits to ease the pressure of a rising backlog of court cases, the Guardian understands.

The coronavirus lockdown temporarily halted jury trials in March and despite the government creating "Nightingale" courts there are more than 500,000 cases yet to be heard by magistrates and in crown courts, an increase of about 100,000 on pre-pandemic levels.

In July a crown court judge ordered that a suspected drug dealer be released from prison because the shortage of courtrooms meant his trial was unlikely to be heard until 2021.

The Guardian understands the custody time limit is to be increased from six months to eight months through secondary legislation.

Prosecutors are able to apply for custody time limits to be extended but it is in a judge's power to refuse an application.

The Ministry of Justice did not respond to requests for comment.

David Lammy, the shadow justice secretary, said: "Rather than deal with the backlog they helped create through a decade of cuts and court closures, the government has been forced to increase the amount of time unconvicted defendants spend locked up. As a result, justice will be further delayed for the victims of crime, as well as defendants.

"This is the result of the government's incompetence and complete failure to address the crisis in our courts that Labour has been warning about for months."

The MoJ has been reducing the number of inmates held in jail as part of its approach to managing coronavirus across the estate. The total number of prisoners held in England and Wales is about 4,000 lower than in March. But any move to increase the amount of time prisoners are held on remand is likely to slow down the rate at which the total prison estate is reducing.

In a rare criticism of the government in July, one judge, Keith Raynor, said: "Many defendants in custody will not be tried until well into 2021." He was speaking at Woolwich crown court, where he refused to grant a third extension in custody for a man accused of drug offences.

500,000

Number of cases yet to be heard in magistrates and crown courts after the pandemic halted jury trials

▼ *A child at the finale of the London borough of culture in Waltham Forest in 2019 and, left, Hull city of culture 2017*

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: MATT ALEXANDER/PA

London arts take 'double share' of lottery funding

Helen Pidd
North of England editor

Community art projects in London have received more than twice as much lottery funding as those in the rest of England, a thinktank has calculated, arguing for the devolution of culture subsidies.

Between 2009 and 2018, Arts Council England national lottery funding contributed the equivalent of £50.40 a person to organisations based in London, compared with £21.26 a person for the rest of England, according to the Fabian Society, a left-leaning thinktank affiliated to the Labour party.

Local council spending on arts and culture is also 38.5% lower than 10 years ago, with more than £860m in real terms cut from annual council spending. As a result, the arts and culture sector was fragile even before Covid-19 hit, the society argues.

It says centralised public funding of arts and culture is not working, and it wants Arts Council England community funding to be devolved to councils and metro mayors.

Its report, Cultured Communities, argues that there is a long-standing crisis in arts and culture funding, fuelled by a decade of government cuts, which has left community arts and culture extremely vulnerable after lockdown.

It says local authorities should be supported by Arts Council England, affording "a reset of the arts and culture ecosystem across England which will secure a focus on grassroots organisations, freelancers and small creative businesses."

£50.40
Equivalent amount per person of lottery grants Arts Council England gave London art projects in 2009-18

£21.26
Equivalent amount per person given to community arts projects across the rest of England over the same period

Ben Cooper, a Fabian Society researcher, said: "Community arts and culture is an economic must-have for every village, town and city if the government is serious about levelling up. These grassroots organisations can support the high street, the hospitality sector and improve everyone's quality of life. If the arts thrive, we all do."

The report examined how Hull's title of UK city of culture 2017 and Waltham Forest as London borough of culture in 2019 benefited local communities, improving wellbeing, social mobility and the local economy.

In June the government announced £1.6bn of support for the arts, but it took 20 days for the first tranche, 0.2% of the package, to be made available.

Laura Dyer, deputy chief executive for places and engagement at Arts Council England, said: "Since 2018, we've invested 75% of our national lottery budget outside the capital, an increase from 60%. We've invested £181m in national lottery project grants since it launched in 2018, and 75% of this has gone outside the capital, with the north receiving 27.4% of that funding. We are also working in close partnership with local authorities, to bring our expertise alongside their local knowledge to support investment in culture."

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Rashford rebukes Tory MP in clash over child food poverty

Helen Pidd

Marcus Rashford has rebuked a Conservative MP on Twitter for suggesting that parents who need help to feed their children are failing in their parental responsibilities.

The Man United star responded to Kevin Hollinrake, the MP for Thirsk and Malton, suggesting that he talk to struggling families before tweeting.

The discussion began after Hollinrake tweeted that 186,000 discounted meals had been claimed via the government's "eat out to help out" scheme in his North Yorkshire constituency.

A Twitter user responded to say that it was "undoubtedly a success, Kevin, and I'm sure warmly welcomed by the hospitality industry. Credit where it's due. Whilst we're discussing food, why does it take footballer @MarcusRashford to make a stand for the hungry children in our society? Is that not the government's job?"

Hollinrake replied: "Where they can, it's a parents job to feed their children." After the rebuke from Rashford, who has 3.3 million Twitter followers, the MP added: "Very happy to debate this with you in any open forum."

Last week, Rashford unveiled the "child food poverty taskforce" that he has formed in concert with brands including Aldi, Tesco, Deliveroo and Kellogg's, three months after he forced a government U-turn on summer holiday school meal vouchers.

"Food poverty is contributing to social unrest," he wrote, reflecting on a series of recent meetings with families in need of the support that he counted on as a child. He described "watching a young boy keeping it together whilst his mother sobbed alongside him, feeling like he has to step up to protect his family and alleviate some of that worry. He was nine years old."

Steve Mason, a Liberal Democrat councillor from Hollinrake's constituency, said: "It's remarkable how Kevin seems to ignore the plight of so many. As our MP, he should be aware of the issues faced by some residents here in Ryedale. Just because he has not experienced it, is not a reason to dismiss it."

▼ *Marcus Rashford has launched a taskforce with food brands and supermarkets to tackle child hunger*

PHOTOGRAPH: ASH DONELON/MAN UTD/GETTY

The Tory MP Kevin Hollinrake

'To this day I haven't met one parent who hasn't wanted or felt the responsibility to feed their children ... We need to start uplifting each other'

Marcus Rashford
England footballer

Assaults against police increased 21% in lockdown

PA Media

Police forces across the UK have recorded a 21% increase in assaults on officers during the lockdown period.

Figures from 31 forces show that at least 7,863 instances of assault were recorded over the first three months of lockdown, compared with 6,505 for the same period in 2019.

Leicestershire police recorded a 102% rise in assaults, the highest of any force, with 205 cases in the first three months of lockdown, up from 101. Derbyshire recorded the next highest rise at 57%, while South Yorkshire and Cleveland each noted a 55% rise.

Simon Cole, the chief constable of Leicestershire, said a "distasteful trend" of spitting and coughing on officers and threatening to infect them with coronavirus had developed.

Leicestershire officers were spat on 38 times in the first three months of lockdown, up from 20 in the same period last year. There were also 10 incidents of coughing on officers, with none recorded last year.

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You do the maths

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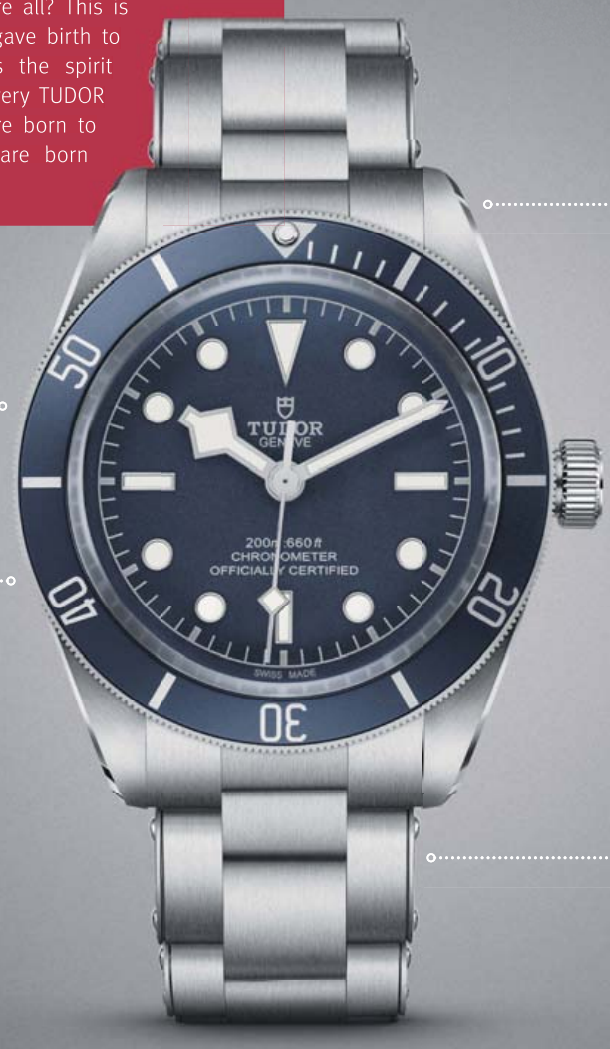

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BLACK BAY FIFTY-EIGHT

Labour MPs call on London mayor to scrap river tunnel

Matthew Taylor

The shadow minister for climate change has urged the mayor of London to abandon plans for a four-lane road tunnel under the Thames.

Matthew Pennycook said there was still time for Sadiq Khan to reverse plans for the new £1.2bn Silvertown tunnel, which is opposed by environmentalists, climate scientists and many local residents.

"Serious works have not started and the financial situation at TfL [Transport for London] may lead to a reassessment of the project's viability," he said. Opponents of the scheme say it would be environmentally destructive – undermining efforts to clean up the capital's polluted air and the mayor's wider environmental targets.

Pennycook was appointed to the climate change portfolio by Keir Starmer and is the MP for Greenwich and Woolwich, at the tunnel's southern end.

Along with Lyn Brown, the Labour MP for West Ham, across the river, Pennycook has written to Khan outlining their objections and urging the mayor to review the project.

"Green transport must be the future for our city," the letter says. "That means a focus not on roadbuilding but on large-scale investment in adapted public transport, ensuring more frequent and reliable bus and rail services; and measures to significantly boost walking and cycling."

The MPs add that the "perilous state" of TfL's finances due to Covid-19 "is reason enough to review the case for embarking on a major capital project of this scale, particularly given that the future health and prosperity of our city is more and more dependent on us reducing our reliance on cars."

In June, a report from the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies found the Silvertown tunnel was incompatible with the Greater London Authority's aim to become carbon-neutral by 2030.

A spokesperson for Khan said the tunnel would be funded by a toll, not TfL cash, and was essential to improve river crossings and bus links. Introducing tolls on the existing Blackwall tunnel and at Silvertown, as well as the extension of the city's ultra-low emission zone from next year, would "play a crucial role in tackling congestion and improving air quality".

Extinction Rebellion calls move to class it a crime gang 'ridiculous'

Henry McDonald

Extinction Rebellion has described government moves to treat the climate crisis protest movement as an organised crime group as "ridiculous".

The group said associating it with the state's definition of a crime gang as "characterised by violence or the threat of violence and by the use of bribery and corruption" was an insult to the thousands of ordinary citizens who supported its cause.

Yesterday the Labour leader, Keir Starmer, condemned an Extinction Rebellion protest that disrupted the distribution of national newspapers.

Starmer said: "The free press is the cornerstone of democracy and we must do all we can to protect it. Denying people the chance to read what they choose is wrong and does nothing to tackle climate change."

Defending its weekend protests outside two printing presses in Hertfordshire and Merseyside, Extinction Rebellion said the government's threatened reclassification was "hardly an accurate description of the thousands of ordinary people – the nurses, the doctors, the grandparents and others – who take part in Extinction Rebellion's non-violent protests".

More than 100 protesters used vehicles and bamboo structures to block roads outside the Newsprinters sites at Broxbourne in Hertfordshire and Knowsley, near Liverpool, on Friday evening. Hertfordshire police said delivery lorries had not left the Broxbourne site as of 6am on Saturday, and that 42 arrests had been made.

The presses print News UK titles including the Sun, the Times, the Sun on Sunday and the Sunday Times, as well as the Daily Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph, the Daily Mail and Mail on Sunday and the London Evening Standard.

▲ *Extinction Rebellion protesters at the printing site in Hertfordshire*

Boris Johnson and the home secretary, Priti Patel, also condemned the blockades.

It was reported yesterday that the prime minister and the home secretary had asked Whitehall officials to take a fresh look at how Extinction Rebellion was classified in law. Ministers were said to be considering new powers to give police greater scope to intercept demonstrators.

Extinction Rebellion accused the Conservative government of bending to the will of Rupert Murdoch and other media tycoons.

"Extinction Rebellion decided to stop the distribution of the print version of several newspapers for one day and suddenly our politicians are up in arms. Where were they when our 'free press' was being bought up by billionaires?" the group said.

In a statement on its website the Telegraph said: "On Friday night, a group of extremists from Extinction Rebellion blockaded the printing plants where the Telegraph and other titles are produced. Production of those newspapers was severely affected and many of our loyal readers were denied the opportunity to read the fine journalism that we produced.

"Therefore we have made the decision that all Telegraph journalism published this weekend is now free to read on our website until Monday morning."

> ***'Denying people the chance to read what they choose is wrong'***
>
> **Keir Starmer**
> *Labour leader*

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Theatre review

Scott is transfixing in a tender elegy to a father

Three Kings
Old Vic: In Camera
★★★★☆

Catherine Love

Three Kings is an unusually quiet play in these noisy times. Stephen Beresford's monologue is a measured and meticulously crafted tale of fathers and sons, tenderly performed by Andrew Scott. Played against the eerie backdrop of the Old Vic's empty auditorium in London, there's something melancholy and at times almost funereal about it – an elegy broken by moments of sharp humour.

Scott, familiar from the BBC's Sherlock and Fleabag, plays Patrick, the son of an eccentric absent father. The three kings of the title refer to a puzzle Patrick's father sets him during a fleeting encounter when he's eight and desperate for love and approval. But the number three resonates throughout the play, from the trio of men with whom Patrick shares conversations to the Christian holy trinity. Patterns repeat and dysfunction is handed from one generation to the next.

Scott – for whom the script was written – is a transfixing presence. Shifting between Patrick at different stages of his life and his estranged, swaggering father, Scott's performance shows us the forces that ricochet down the generations, from little gestures to the enduring pain of abandonment.

Matthew Warchus's direction makes smart use of the subtleties of the live-streamed form. Scott's face is often framed in close-up, creating an intimacy that would be impossible if we were sitting in the Old Vic's auditorium. And as the play goes on, our view of him fragments into different shots, just as his performance suggests a man splintering. While optimised for Zooming, there is something old-fashioned about Beresford's play, with its careful structure and self-contained storytelling.

The theme of fatherhood is a familiar one. It's also part of a big-name season at the Old Vic that's dominated by the kinds of voices that have been traditionally over-represented in theatre, in a programme of three plays by established white male writers. Three Kings is a beautifully constructed story, but it's not the only sort of story we need to be hearing.

▲ *Andrew Scott shows us the forces that ricochet down generations*

Three Kings was live-streamed from the Old Vic, London

PHOTOGRAPH: DANNY LAWSON/PA

Curiouser and curiouser ... Dolly the chihuahua dressed up as Alice in Wonderland, one of many canine entries of all shapes and sizes in the film-themed Furbabies dog pageant held at Jodhpurs riding centre in Tockwith, North Yorkshire, yesterday.

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Assange resumes court fight against extradition to US

Owen Bowcott
Legal affairs correspondent

The WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange is due to appear at the Old Bailey today in the latest stage of his legal battle against extradition to the US where he faces a jail term of up to 175 years.

The hearing, scheduled to last four weeks, will hear allegations by the US Department of Justice that Assange tried to recruit hackers to find classified government information.

A US grand jury had previously indicted Assange on 18 charges – 17 of which fall under the US Espionage Act. They cover conspiracy to receive, obtaining and disclosing classified diplomatic and military documents.

His lawyers say they have been given insufficient time to examine a new US indictment. They argue that the prosecution is politically motivated and that Assange is being pursued because WikiLeaks published US government documents that revealed evidence of war crimes and human rights abuses.

It will be the first time Assange, 49, has been in court for many months. He has missed several recent appearances, even by remote video link, because he has been unwell.

For the past 16 months, since being arrested in the Ecuadorian embassy in April 2019, he has been held on remand at Belmarsh prison. The extradition hearing has been delayed due to Covid-19.

Stella Moris, a South African-born lawyer who is his partner and the mother of their two children, will be among those in court. She told PA Media Assange's health was suffering and she feared her children growing up without seeing their father.

"Julian's case has huge repercussions for freedom of expression and freedom of the press. This is an attack on journalism. If he is extradited to the US for publishing inconvenient truths about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, then it will set a precedent, and any British journalist or publisher could also be extradited in the future."

The case is being heard by the district judge Vanessa Baraitser who normally sits at Westminster magistrates court and regularly hears extradition cases.

Any decision made by the district judge is likely to go to appeal at a higher court.

NHS does not see us as priority, say black patients in study

Denis Campbell
Health policy editor

Almost two-thirds of black Britons think the NHS does less to protect their health than that of white people, research has found.

That negative view of the health service is shared by a majority of black people of almost all ages, and is held especially strongly by women, according to findings from a study commissioned by a parliamentary committee.

Overall 64% of black people do not believe their health is as equally protected by the NHS. Asked if they thought it was, 34.3% disagreed while 29.6% disagreed strongly; 19.9% agreed and 2.4% agreed strongly.

The survey was commissioned by MPs and peers on the joint committee on human rights as part of its inquiry into racism and human rights in the UK. Findings will be published and debated at an evidence session today.

The widespread perception among black Britons that they receive unequal treatment comes as the NHS grapples with how to tackle the disproportionate number of deaths from Covid-19 among its black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. The findings follow concern that black doctors in the health service are often paid less than white colleagues and are less likely to get promoted.

Harriet Harman, the former cabinet minister who chairs the committee, warned NHS bosses they were obliged not to discriminate.

"The state has a duty to protect life and not to discriminate," she said. "These findings are stark, especially as so many black people work in the NHS yet still feel that it does not value their lives equally. The fact that this is most strongly felt by black women perhaps reflects women's greater role in caring for children and older relatives."

The committee commissioned the survey as part of its work to better understand the views, attitudes and perceptions among the black community about how their human rights are protected.

Amid a high death toll among BAME people from Covid-19, Sir Simon Stevens, NHS England's chief executive, acknowledged in May that "ethnicity and race have been shown systematically to influence our health, independent of factors such as age, sex and socioeconomic status".

The survey was commissioned from ClearView Research. It interviewed 515 black people, 505 of whom were in England, between 29 July and 12 August. Of them, 274 were of black African origin, 181 were of black Caribbean ethnicity and the others were from other black backgrounds.

One interviewee told the researchers: "We [black people] are not seen as a priority [by the NHS]. We are dealt with on the basis that they have to, but they give us the minimal standard of what they can give to say, 'well, we have done our part'. So as long as they have done that little bit they can tick off."

Harman added: "The NHS cannot ignore these findings or sweep them under the carpet. These findings are a major challenge to which the NHS must respond."

Over-70s were the only age group in the black community among whom most (65%) thought their health was as equally protected by the NHS as that of white people.

An NHS spokesperson said: "While this survey finds that most older black patients – those over 70 and who therefore typically use the NHS most – are positive about their experience, there is no doubt that more needs to be done to improve the experience of all black and minority ethnic people using health services."

Unequal treatment

64%
Black people who told researchers the NHS did not protect their health equally compared with white people

515
Black people who took part in the study, on behalf of parliament's joint committee on human rights

70+
The only age group among whom a majority (65%) expressed a positive view of NHS impartiality

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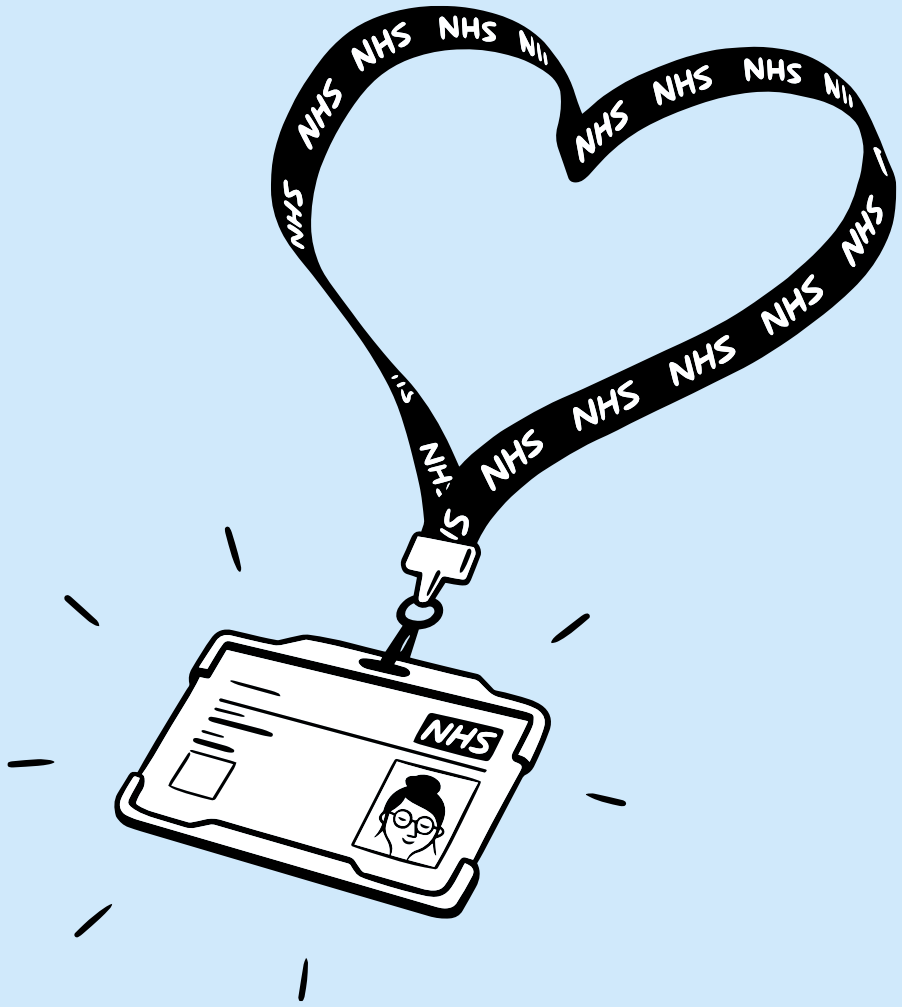

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Grenfell survivors condemn ban on families attending public inquiry

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Survivors and the bereaved of the Grenfell Tower fire have branded as "madness" rules that mean they can eat at Nando's or drink in a pub but are still not allowed to attend the public inquiry into the deaths of their loved ones, which restarts today.

The builders involved in the disastrous refurbishment will continue giving evidence in front of an empty inquiry room in Paddington this week, followed by building safety officials from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and next month by executives at the council's housing arm, which acted as landlord.

But the community will still be prohibited from attending because of a lockout in place since the inquiry restarted in July, after pausing during the height of the coronavirus pandemic.

A live YouTube broadcast of witnesses being cross-examined in front of the chairman, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, and his fellow panellist, Thouria Istephan, an architect and health and safety expert, is made available.

The inquiry has said that it is "planning for bereaved, survivor and resident [BSR] attendance as soon as it is possible" and is considering a ballot system allowing 10 members of the community in at a time.

But it told the more than 600 core participants in the inquiry: "The resumption of hearings in September is not the right time to relax arrangements and compromise the two-metre distancing standard."

"The inquiry continues to take health and safety guidance extremely seriously and whilst we are keen to enable more numbers within the venue, we must remain cognisant of the evolving public health position," Mark Fisher, the director general of the inquiry, told participants in a letter. "As soon as we are able to increase the number of people who can attend hearings, BSR attendance will be the panel's main concern and they will be prioritised above all other parties."

> ***'People are squashed on to beaches, I can go into a pub and drink without a mask, but I can't go to the public inquiry'***
>
> **Karim Mussilhy**
> *Grenfell bereaved*

The position has frustrated survivors and the bereaved.

"I walk into Nando's and everyone is casual, people are squashed on to beaches, I can go into a pub and have a pint without a mask but I can't come into the public inquiry," said Karim Mussilhy, whose uncle Hesham Rahman died in the fire.

He said it was important for the grieving process to be able to look witnesses in the face to "see their facial expressions and what emotions they are bringing to the table and to see if you can catch their eye and project some of the pain and emotion".

He said: "This may be the only way we get to see these people. We may never get the chance again."

The inquiry said it was working with the Government Property Agency (GPA) "to ensure our premises are as safe as they can be for those who need to attend".

The GPA approves the numbers allowed in each room in the venue and these limits would not currently allow for extra people.

The restrictions are adding to tensions between the Grenfell community and the government. Last month, Grenfell United, the survivors group, refused to meet the housing secretary, Robert Jenrick, citing his involvement with the property developer Richard Desmond over the Westferry housing development and what they claim is a lack of progress on social housing reform and slow progress enforcing findings of the first phase of the inquiry.

They told him in a letter: "Your perceived focus on the interests of property developers over the needs of an impoverished local community has soured our opinion of you.

"It tells us you have learnt nothing from your previous interactions and conversations with Grenfell United committee members who lost so much on the night of the fire.

"Bereaved families and survivors sat with you and opened their hearts, and your actions have thrown this trust back in our faces."

They are also frustrated that Downing Street has not appointed an inquiry panellist with expertise in community matters, as it promised in January.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government said: "The secretary of state and the department hugely value the relationship with Grenfell United, who have been a vital partner since the Grenfell Tower tragedy.

"We look forward to continuing our relationship with them as we move forward with key priorities including the building safety bill, fire safety bill and the social housing white paper over the coming months."

Revelations so far Admissions that suggest desire for cost-cutting and quick fixes helped cause tragedy

Robert Booth

The Grenfell Tower public inquiry restarts today – 28 months since it began with tearful tributes to the 72 dead. Hearings are expected to run into 2022, but the forensic analysis of how the high-rise homes were wrapped in combustible cladding has started to produce devastating revelations.

The families group Grenfell United summed it up in a letter to the housing secretary, Robert Jenrick: "We have witnessed shocking dereliction of care and professionalism … a total lack of empathy towards our loss and a focus on greed and profit at the expense of the wellbeing of residents."

Here we draw some of the strands together.

'Pocketing the difference'

The pressures that led professionals to wrap Grenfell Tower in plastics that burned like petrol on 14 June 2017 could be seen as early as 2013 when cost-cutting began. The landlord, Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) – an arm of one of the richest councils in Britain – decided a refurbishment quote was £1.6m too high. Rydon, a Sussex-based contractor, saw an opportunity. It had wrapped the Chalcots and Ferrier Point council towers in London in the same potentially lethal ACM cladding that it would use at Grenfell. "This one has 'our' name written all over it," enthused Mark Harris, the commercial manager for Harley, Rydon's cladding subcontractor.

The landlord had to tender the job publicly under EU procurement rules. But the transparency of that process has been questioned. In 2014 with bidding under way, Rydon renewed a long-held relationship with senior executives at the TMO at a housing conference in Brighton. Rydon sponsored a regular drinks reception to entertain prospective clients and as usual, its contracts manager, Stephen Blake, spent time with the TMO. His relationship

▲ *A press conference in Ladbroke Grove, London, by the Grenfell Next of Kin group, to coincide with the resumption of the inquiry*

PHOTOGRAPH: GUILHEM BAKER/LNP

with the its assets director, Peter Maddison, "goes back a long way", the inquiry heard. The contract interviews still hadn't happened but Blake's TMO contacts gave him the nod. "We are in pole position - ours to lose," he emailed colleagues.

Rydon's £9.2m bid was far cheaper than that of its rivals, Durkan and Mulalley, but that wasn't enough for the TMO. Maddison told the Rydon CEO, Jeff Henton, that "subject to a small amount of value engineering", a euphemism for cost-cutting, he would recommend its appointment. The desired cuts were £800,000.

Did the TMO give the other bidders a chance to make the same adjustment? Blake didn't know, he told the inquiry. Was there, asked Richard Millett QC, counsel to the inquiry, "a secret understanding ... that if you agreed to reduce your contract price by £800,000, you would get the job?" Blake denied it.

Now came the crucial switch of materials to cladding that spread the fire. In 2013 the designers, Studio E, suggested switching from zinc to cheaper plastic-filled aluminium panels after being shown samples by a sales representative for the manufacturer Arconic, which had already admitted internally the panels were "unsuitable for use on building facades" in Europe. The TMO in turn suggested the switch to Rydon, which found it could save up to £576,000, but only told the TMO the benefit would be up to £376,000.

"Was the plan in Rydon to keep the TMO in the dark about the real extent of the savings on the ACM panels and then pocket the difference to make up the shortfall?" asked counsel to the inquiry, Richard Millett QC. (The shortfall came from an arithmetic blunder Rydon says it made in its initial estimate, which was £212,000 too low.)

"That could be the reason for it," replied Simon Lawrence, Rydon's contracts manager.

'Essex boy patter'

Did Rydon know the safety implications of the cladding switch? Lawrence said it assumed "what was being proposed by the client, the design team, would be compliant".

At one point the client itself had been concerned. In 2015, one of the TMO's executives, David Gibson, started worrying about the 2009 Lakanal House cladding fire that killed six people and whether the panels would spread flames. "Simon Lawrence assured us that this would create no problem because the materials used were completely inert and would not burn at all," he told the inquiry. Lawrence denied saying this.

In May 2014 Lawrence had tried to use "Essex boy patter" to persuade the TMO to use a cheaper version of the cladding system, saving Rydon £75,000. "I'm giving it my hardest sales pitch as we speak," he told colleagues by email.

There were other worrying revelations. Bruce Sounes, the project architect at Studio E, admitted he didn't tell building control when the zinc panels were switched to plastic-filled aluminium. Rydon promised five times to appoint fire safety advisers but failed to do so. Its site manager, Daniel Osgood, was given the job of overseeing the cladding contractors' work despite not knowing cladding could be combustible or cavity barriers were needed around windows to stop fire spread. "I just assumed that everything was 100% fireproof," he said.

After a while he was moved from the project. Lawrence wrote in an email: "In my opinion he is just a chancer who wants to do as little as possible and not be responsible for anything." Osgood said this was "very unfair" and he was applying himself 100%.

'Easier and quicker'

It wasn't just the cladding that burned. Combustible materials were packed around the new windows, which, the inquiry heard "contributed to the speed at which the fire spread from the flat ... to a multi-storey external fire".

These, it emerged, were installed by a small put profitable subcontractor run from Hampshire by a former Rydon manager Mark Dixon. Simon Lawrence, who let the contract, said "we knew and trusted [Dixon] well". But the £120,000 contract went badly. Dixon complained the works gave him a "headache" and "I need to find ways of making it easier and quicker".

The specification was to pack the gaps around the windows with non-combustible Rockwool mineral insulation fibre. Instead Dixon's company, SD Plastering, used combustible Celotex foam boards.

Lawrence told the inquiry he didn't read a bill of works showing Dixon's intent. Neither did Simon O'Connor, Rydon's project manager. When O'Connor inspected the works there were missing finishes and gaps. He thought it was "a disaster".

'Shoddy workmanship'

The project was undermined by "shockingly poor workmanship ... allowed to happen unchecked", the inquiry heard. Fire barriers in the cladding system were installed upside down and the wrong way round. Some were roughly cut and gaps were left.

When cladding frames rattled in the wind at night keeping residents awake, the TMO's project manager, Claire Williams forwarded a complaint to Rydon of "shoddy workmanship ... posing a great danger to everyone".

David Collins, a resident in flat 185 "found a part of the window installation hanging loose". Rydon asked for it to be dealt with because 185 was "a problem property" and Collins "will shout this from the roof tops if not resolved promptly".

Lawrence branded residents who questioned the quality of works as "rebels" and told the inquiry there were "several very vocal, dare I say aggressive residents". He named Eddie Daffarn, a 16th-floor resident and co-author of the Grenfell Action blog, who predicted that a fire could devastate the block eight months before the blaze.

Internally, Rydon had its own worries about quality. "At the moment we have a poorly performing site which is mainly (but not totally) caused by poor surveying and cheap incompetent sub-contractors," Lawrence emailed a colleague in June 2015.

Neil Reed, the head of project delivery at the landlord's agent, Artelia, complained in another email: "I have to say I do not think I have ever worked with a contractor operating with this level of nonchalance."

Rydon said: "We continue to cooperate with the inquiry alongside the many other parties that were involved in the run up to and delivery of the Grenfell Tower refurbishment. We will act accordingly in relation to any recommendations relevant to the industry that come out of the phase 2 inquiry report. Our thoughts continue to be with those affected."

▲ *Tributes at the scene of the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017, which resulted in 72 deaths*

PHOTOGRAPH: GUILHEM BAKER/LNP

'There was shockingly poor workmanship that was allowed to happen unchecked'

Evidence to the inquiry

Partied out

Relief on Dartmoor as peace returns

Steven Morris

▼ Simon Lee, a ranger team manager for Dartmoor national park, said the mess had been 'horrendous'
PHOTOGRAPH: JIM WILEMAN/THE GUARDIAN

The scene could hardly be more idyllic. A grassy bank next to a clear, burbling river. Herons patrol the shallows while deer, wild ponies and cattle trot down the hillside for a drink.

This spot at Bellever, Dartmoor, was very different at the height of the summer, when hundreds of "fly campers" descended with tents, sound systems and generators for a taste of post-lockdown freedom.

They collected wood and lit fires, putting the environment and bronze-age archaeological sites at risk. The gorse bushes on the slopes were turned into makeshift toilets, the woods became the site of raves. At one point, 60 groups were crammed on the Devon riverbank.

"It was horrendous," said Simon Lee, Dartmoor national park ranger team manager. " I understand why people would want to camp but they were not doing it the right way. It was loud and messy. There was rubbish all over ... human excrement in the gorse bushes, more than 100 fire pits dug into the ground."

Much work has been done to restore the site and ensure wildlife, including otters and salmon, do not suffer long term. But the scars of the fire-pits are still obvious and detritus - a child's flip-flop, a plastic bag - washes up from time to time on the banks of the East Dart River.

In the lockdown, huge numbers of people took tents and barbecues to the countryside, putting flora and fauna at risk. Dartmoor was a particular problem, as it is one of the few places in England where wild camping is allowed in some places.

But there are rules: you can camp as part of a hike; you have to carry your own equipment; can only stay a maximum of two nights; your camp site should be 100 metres from the nearest road, out of sight and you should leave no trace. Large tents and big groups are not allowed, neither are open fires or barbecues.

▲ Jon Foot, Dawn McGeorge, and Matt Crawford follow the rules

"I don't think people grasped the concept of wild camping," said Martin Jones, a keen wild camper who lives nearby. "We had to put up with a mini-rave, boy racers, and the whole place was turned into a toilet." He has missed the churring of the nightjar, a bird that usually hawks for food at dawn and dusk at Bellever. "They vanished when the campers came," said Jones.

So critical was the situation that a section of the Dartmoor Common Act 1985 was invoked, banning camping at Bellever and on the high ground above it, Riddon Ridge, from 7 August to 2 September. Marshals were employed to help rangers patrol the riverbanks and hillsides. But rangers are still asking people not to camp at Bellever and the Riddon Ridge for the rest of the year and the marshals remain.

Vanessa and Björn Michael, from Bedfordshire, were among the first to return. They have camped here before, though not this summer: "We follow the leave no trace rules and stay invisible." After seeing it was a "wildlife recovery zone", they went to find another spot.

As dusk fell, more tents began to appear. Campers Jon Foot and Dawn McGeorge had come from Scotland to meet family from Devon.They were tucked away in a hollow, cooking halloumi and veggie sausages as they took in the sunset. Asked what the draw was, Foot pointed out the bright red sky and the first stars. "There's nothing better than getting out into a landscape like this. It's wonderful to be out here in the wild," said Foot.

The concern is that if the crowds continue to converge on spots like Bellever, the spirit of wild camping on Dartmoor will be lost for ever.

Prescribing home blood pressure kits 'would cut heart attacks'

Ian Sample
Science editor

Blood-pressure monitors should be handed out on prescription to cut the number of people who die or are left with disabilities from strokes and heart attacks, a medical charity has said.

Making the home monitors available to anyone diagnosed with high blood pressure would allow people to control the condition more effectively and reduce demand on GPs' surgeries, Blood Pressure UK said.

"It would make a huge difference," said Prof Graham MacGregor, the charity's chair. "High blood pressure is the biggest killer in the world from the strokes and heart attacks it causes, and we know that if you are found to have raised blood pressure and it's treated with tablets and lifestyle changes, it hugely reduces your risk."

The charity was concerned that a poll of more than 2,000 people had found that of the 42% who had high blood pressure, 48% preferred not to say if it was under control.

The main risk factors for developing high blood pressure are eating too much salt and not enough fruit and vegetables, being overweight and not doing enough exercise.

MacGregor said: "As an individual, having your blood pressure checked is the most important step that you can take to reduce your risk of stroke, heart attack or heart failure. This is why we are calling for home monitors to be available to those most in need on prescription, especially at a time when appointments with GPs and nurses are restricted, which may prolong getting your blood pressure checked."

Of the 16 million people in the UK with high blood pressure, only half are on treatment and of those, about half again are believed to have the condition under control.

"There's a very large number of people with high blood pressure that is not being controlled and that causes a huge number of strokes and heart disease," MacGregor said.

The charity called for the monitors to be given to patients in the same way that people with type 2 diabetes had glucose monitors to check on their blood sugar. MacGregor said allowing people to check blood pressure at home would save the NHS "hundreds of millions of pounds" by easing demand on GPs and nurses, and reducing the number of patients who suffered heart attacks and strokes.

MacGregor, a professor of cardiovascular medicine at the Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, said that if purchased in bulk, the monitors might cost as little as £15 per patient, and instead of visiting their GPs, patients could phone or email in their recordings.

"The cost is small and the savings would be huge," he said.

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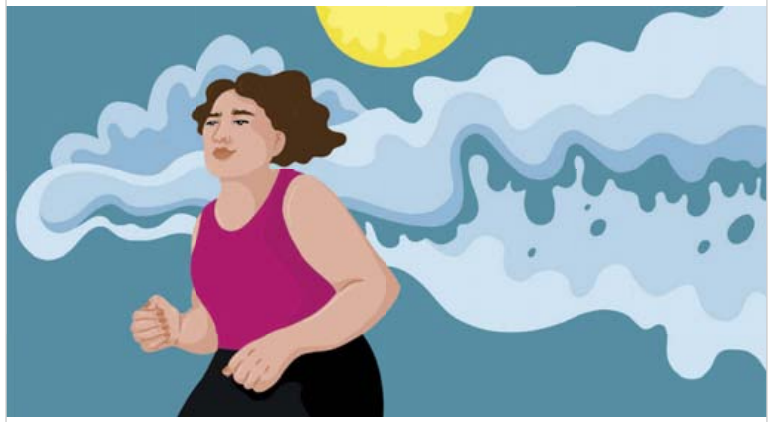

Keep on running

Leaky bladder? It's nothing to be ashamed of, says a dedicated distance runner, who battled with her post-baby body to complete a half marathon.

theguardian.com/the-last-taboo

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Hidden castle played vital role in medieval England

PA Media

A lost castle has been identified as one of the most important strongholds in medieval England.

Archaeologists studying the site of Sheffield Castle say the massive structure deserves a place in English history alongside well-known landmarks such as those in Warwick, Dover and the Tower of London.

The castle site is in the centre of the city, at the confluence of the River Don and the River Sheaf, but the structure was demolished in the English civil war.

The little that still remains was hidden for years in the basement of a grim, concrete market complex.

But the site has been opened up by the redevelopment of the area and archaeologists say there is strong evidence that more substantial parts of the castle walls may still be in place.

A spokesman for the University of Sheffield said a new assessment of all the excavations on the site "reveals how Sheffield Castle was among the most important political and cultural centres in medieval England, home to aristocrats who played major roles in local, national and international affairs".

▲ *Digging at the castle in the 1950s. It was a key fortress, say archaeologists*

The team concluded that the castle "played a major role in local, national and international affairs in the medieval era, and shaped the development and topography of modern-day Sheffield".

Professor John Moreland from the university's department of archaeology said: "Sheffield is seen by most people as the Steel City, but what our research makes clear is that the city has a deep history that dates right back to the Middle Ages."

In brief

Finance

Windsor revealed as tax avoidance hotspot

Towns in the stockbroker belt of the home counties have the biggest concentration of people admitting tax avoidance, with Windsor top of the list, a new study has suggested.

There were 23 disclosures to HM Revenue & Customs in Windsor of unpaid tax per 100,000 population last year, compared with the UK average of seven, the accountancy group UHY Hacker Young said. St Albans, with 20 disclosures, was second, followed by Guildford and Tunbridge Wells. Oxford, Cambridge and Reading also featured in the list of top locations.

UHY Hacker Young said high net-worth individuals had become increasingly likely to admit tax avoidance to escape harsh penalties.

An HMRC spokesman said: "Most tax-avoidance schemes simply do not work and those who engage in them can find that they pay more than the tax they attempted to avoid once HMRC has successfully challenged them." PA Media

PHOTOGRAPH: GREGG WOLSTENHOLME/ BAV MEDIA

Lightbulb moment Blackpool Tower lit up last night for the first weekend of this year's Blackpool Illuminations. The annual spectacle began in 1879, with the lights usually staying on for about two months until early November. This year, in an attempt to boost the resort's tourism season following the lockdown, they will not be switched off until 3 January.

Crime

Border officials find £1m hidden in lorries

Border Force officials found more than £1m hidden in two lorries trying to leave the UK at Dover docks on Friday. Bundles of banknotes in plastic bags were concealed in refrigerated motor housings.

The drivers, Turkish men working for a firm in Belgium, have been charged with money laundering, the National Crime Agency said.

Dursun Mehmet Keles, 49, will appear in a virtual hearing at Medway magistrates court today. Yusuf Yukel, 50, will appear before magistrates in October. PA Media

Police

Five held after stabbing in south-east London

Five men have been arrested on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm after five men were injured – one seriously – during a "stabbing attack" in south-east London over the weekend.

Officers were called to reports of a stabbing on the Broadway in Bexleyheath, at around 9.30pm on Saturday. One of the injured men has potentially life-threatening injuries, according to the Metropolitan police, who have appealed for witnesses to come forward. PA Media

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World

▲ The beach in Porto Cervo on Sardinia's Costa Smeralda. The region has been linked to hundreds of recent Covid-19 cases in Italy PHOTOGRAPH: EMANUELE PERRONE/GETTY

Sardinia How island playground of rich and famous became notorious over Covid

Angela Giuffrida
Civitavecchia

Civitavecchia port, about 50 miles from Rome, would ordinarily be bustling with cruise passengers. Today, the most salient feature is a drive-through coronavirus centre, where people travelling by ferry to or from Spain or the island of Sardinia can voluntarily be tested for the virus.

The facility was established quickly after a surge in cases in the Lazio region, which have mostly been linked to young people who went on holiday on Sardinia's Costa Smeralda in the island's north-east, favoured by the wealthy.

Medical staff work in shifts, with tests carried out on passengers disembarking from ferries in the morning and on those leaving in the afternoon. Results are known within half an hour.

"In the morning we get about 900 people," a staff member said. "There are less in the afternoon as fewer people are leaving."

Of the 960 tests carried out on Wednesday, six were positive.

Almost 800 cases in Lazio in recent weeks have been traced to the Costa Smeralda. Alessio D'Amato, Lazio's health councillor, has compared the spread of infection to February's Champions League match between Atalanta and Valencia in Milan, which is believed to have contributed to the start of Italy's pandemic.

"We have had a significant number within a very short period of time, this is why I made the comparison," D'Amato said.

A third of Lazio's daily rise in cases could be connected to those who had been in Costa Smeralda. Several clusters had been traced to nightclubs, including Billionaire, which is owned by Flavio Briatore, the former Formula One team boss who was confirmed to have tested positive for coronavirus late last month. The average age of those testing positive was 25.

"Evidently there was a phenomenon of gatherings, in bars and nightclubs, with few controls, which then provoked a wave that we are identifying through testing, mainly in Civitavecchia, but also at other drive-ins," added D'Amato.

Holidaymakers returning from Sardinia have also brought the virus home to other Italian regions including Campania, Puglia, Emilia-Romagna, Veneto and Lombardy.

Amid a rise in cancelled trips, Sardinia's regional governor, Christian Solinas, has pledged to take legal action over media depictions of the island - which was relatively Covid-free at the end of July - as Italy's new hub of infection.

The coverage was amplified on Wednesday when the former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi was confirmed to have coronavirus after returning from his villa on Costa Smeralda. He was admitted to hospital in Milan on Thursday night.

Berlusconi was pictured socialising with Briatore, neither of them wearing masks, during his stay on the island. Authorities have traced 61 cases to Briatore's club.

> ***'Evidently there was a phenomenon of gatherings, in bars and nightclubs, with few controls'***
>
> **Alessio D'Amato**
> *Lazio health councillor*

Solinas had initially called for summer visitors to Sardinia to carry "health passports" confirming they were clear of the virus, but the idea did not come to pass. Since the start of Italy's pandemic in February, more than 2,400 cases have been registered in Sardinia - among the lowest figures in the country. On Friday, there were 66 new infections.

"In August, with the arrival of a significant number of tourists, some people brought the virus and contagion to Sardinia," Solinas said. "But while in France and Spain there was a rate of 5,000 infections a day and in Italy about 1,400, in Sardinia there were 50 or 70 cases [daily] ... The mass media has instead portrayed Sardinia as the epicentre for the pandemic's new wave. It's a shameful exploitation."

Solinas said he did not understand why Billionaire's cases attracted more attention than a nightclub in Cervia, on the Adriatic coast in Emilia-Romagna, where there were 133 cases.

"These unjustified fears have led to many holiday cancellations," he added. "But Sardinia is welcoming and safe for tourists, and has managed the emergency in an orderly and timely matter."

Paolo Manca, the president of the Sardinia unit of Federalberghi, Italy's hotel association, said hotels had reported cancellations for this month and October. "The cases were really limited to the nightclubs, all the hotels carried out tests and there were practically no cases," he said. "If you're among a group of young people staying in a villa and you go to clubs and restaurants without wearing masks or caring about distancing rules, the problem isn't Sardinia but your attitude."

Sergio Babudieri, the director of the infectious diseases unit at AOU Sassari, a hospital in Sardinia's second largest city, said most cases at the hospital were people who had been in the north-east of the island. However, there were also some from central Sardinia, where 60 cases had been detected in a town of 600.

There were five patients in intensive care in Sassari. A 77-year-old man, who had other illnesses alongside Covid-19, died this week.

"We had a man aged 27 who had serious pneumonia and he risked going into intensive care, but he improved, thank goodness," said Babudieri. "This proves that young people do not escape the severity of this virus."

Pope's warning
Gossip 'worse than virus'

The pope said yesterday that gossip within church communities and the Vatican bureaucracy was a "plague worse than Covid", seeking to divide the Roman Catholic church.

Without giving specifics, he went on at length to say the devil was the "biggest gossiper" who was seeking to divide the church with his lies. "Please brothers and sisters, let's try to not gossip," he said. "Gossip is a plague worse than Covid. Worse."

Francis's comments came as he elaborated on a gospel passage about the need to correct others privately when they did something wrong. The Catholic hierarchy has long relied on this "fraternal correction" among the clergy. Survivors of sexual abuse have said this form of private reprimand has allowed predator priests and superiors who cover up for them to escape punishment. AP

Pope Francis spoke on the need to correct others privately

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Parties wrestle with post-Covid future
Page 26

US election The leftwing Democrats who reject both Biden and Trump

Ankita Rao
New York

This week, in one of his first in-person appearances since the pandemic started, Joe Biden made some voters a promise. "I'm not banning fracking. No matter how many times Donald Trump lies about me," the Democratic presidential nominee said at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, where much of the nearby gas industry relies on fracking.

It was a move meant to extend an olive branch to workers in the fossil fuel industry after he reiterated his commitment to tackling the climate crisis in recent weeks. But for a different section of voters it was another nail in the coffin.

"I don't want to vote for Joe Biden and I don't want to vote for Trump," said Jason Kishineff, who is running for city council in American Canyon, California. "I think either choice is going to lead to human extinction."

Kishineff is part of a leftwing group of voters who say they will not vote for Biden, even if it means a Trump victory, largely because of the candidate's failure to adopt a progressive agenda on healthcare, mass incarceration, the environment and policing.

In 2016, this group was part of the estimated 5 million Americans who voted for third-party candidates, including hundreds of thousands of voters in swing states such as Florida and Michigan. But with less than two months to go before the presidential election experts say the group is less of a factor for Democrats than it was in 2016. That shrinking power could serve either to further alienate progressive voters, or coax them eventually into voting for Biden, especially if he chooses to adopt more progressive policies.

"That group is smaller," said Rashawn Ray, a political sociologist and fellow at the Brookings Institution. "There have been deliberate decisions made with people saying: 'We cannot make this mistake again,' knowing they played a role – even if it's a small role – in Trump getting elected."

Nick Cruse, 29, from Kansas City, Missouri, said it was not that simple for him. "There's no one who has done more damage to the black community in the last 40 years than Biden," he said.

Cruse, who is African American, cited Biden's drafting of the Senate version of the 1994 crime bill, which contributed to mass incarceration rates, and his backing of the 2005 bankruptcy bill, which made it more difficult for people with limited income to pay off their debts.

Angelica Whipple, 29, from Massachusetts, agreed that avoiding a Trump re-election was not enough reason to vote for Biden. "He's very steadfast in not doing anything for progressives," she said. "I don't see how he's that much better than Trump. At least with Trump we see it out front."

▲ *Joe Biden's centrist stance on some issues frustrates many progressives*

> ***'I don't want to vote for Trump or Biden … either choice will lead to human extinction'***
>
> **Jason Kishineff**
> *California*

Cruse and Whipple said Biden's running mate, Kamala Harris, was another drawback for progressives, mostly owing to her past role as a prosecutor.

That has become an even more pointed issue during the past months of protests against police brutality, since neither Biden nor Harris has explicitly condemned far-right agitators, nor committed to defunding police departments.

"He's been doing all of these horrendously centrist things and surrendering to the Republican narrative of protesters being rioters," said Matt Myers, a software engineer from Seattle. "Making the false equivalence … it's just not acceptable. He's basically kicking the left in the teeth."

Even so, several of the progressive voters said they would consider voting for Biden if he were to adopt some of their key policy demands, such as Medicare for All, which has widespread support among Democrats. So far, they said, that had not come to fruition.

"If Biden is willing to support [those policies] I will sacrifice my own integrity and vote for him," Kishineff said.

PHOTOGRAPH: BOB DAEMMRICH/REUTERS

Stormy waters A boat parade across Lake Travis in Texas in support of Donald Trump at the weekend ended with several vessels sinking in choppy waters. No injuries were reported. Pro-Trump flotillas this summer have featured several thousand boats, encouraged by the president. "I just wish I had time, I'd get on one of those boats," he said in a campaign video.

'Nothing but pain': Jacob Blake speaks from hospital

Associated Press
Milwaukee

Jacob Blake has spoken publicly for the first time since a police officer shot him seven times in the back. The 29-year-old says he is in constant pain from the shooting, which doctors fear will leave him paralysed from the waist down.

In a video posted on Twitter by his family's lawyer, Ben Crump, Blake said from his hospital bed that "every 24 hours it's pain, nothing but pain. It hurts to breathe, it hurts to sleep, it hurts to move from side to side, it hurts to eat".

Blake, a father of six, said he had staples in his back and stomach.

"Your life, and not only just your life, your legs … can be taken from you like this," Blake said, snapping his fingers. He added: "Stick together, make some money, make everything easier for our people out there, man, because there's so much time that's been wasted."

Blake, who is black, was shot in the back by a white police officer on 23 August after walking away from three officers who were trying to arrest him. The officer who shot him, Rusten Sheskey, fired after Blake opened his car door and leaned into the vehicle. The shooting was captured on video, sparking unrest in Kenosha, Wisconsin, a city of about 100,000 between Milwaukee and Chicago.

Sheskey and the other officers were placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation. None has been charged.

Blake, who had an outstanding arrest warrant when he was shot, pleaded not guilty on Friday to charges of sexually assaulting a woman in May. He appeared remotely via video link from his hospital bed, and spoke only to respond to the judge's questions.

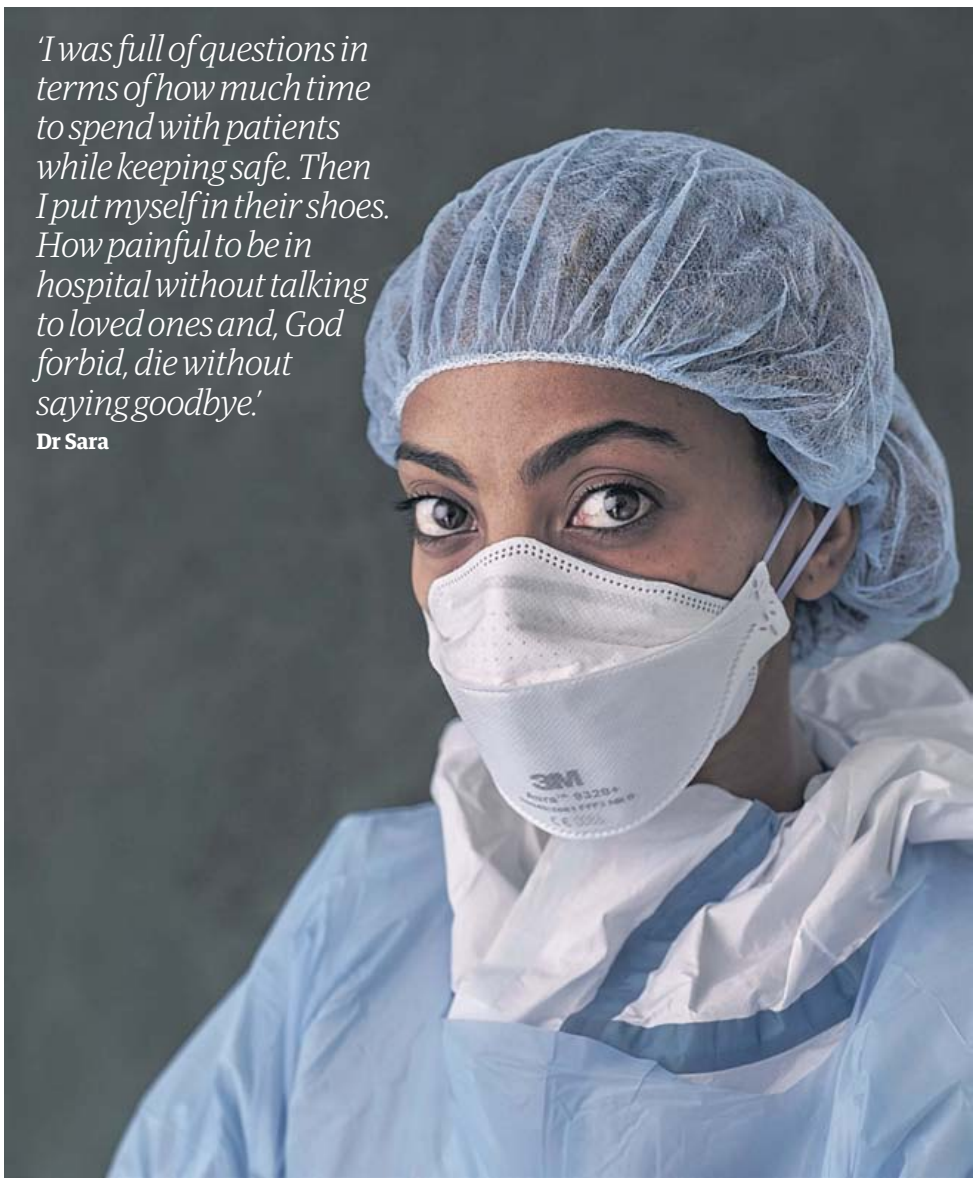
The state justice department has said a knife was recovered from Blake's vehicle, but it has not said whether he was holding it when officers tried to arrest him. The man who filmed the shooting on his phone, Raysean White, 22, said he heard officers yell, "Drop the knife", then gunfire. He said he did not see a knife in Blake's hands.

The Kenosha police union said Blake had refused orders to drop the knife. He fought with police, putting one officer in a headlock, the union said. Police twice used a Taser on Blake before he was shot.

▲ *Jacob Blake in his hospital bed, in a video posted on Twitter by his lawyer*

On Ethiopia's frontline

The first case of Covid-19 was reported in Ethiopia on 13 March, when a team of first responders were called to a 48-year-old Japanese man. Since then, doctors, nurses, cleaners, security guards and drivers have all risked their health and that of their families to treat the country's patients. Yonas Tadesse is an Ethiopian photographer who has been documenting the frontline workers battling Covid-19 since March. This series focuses on workers at Eka Kotebe hospital in Addis Ababa.



'I was full of questions in terms of how much time to spend with patients while keeping safe. Then I put myself in their shoes. How painful to be in hospital without talking to loved ones and, God forbid, die without saying goodbye.'

Dr Sara

'I feel I'm eradicating the virus so I feel proud. But this job has cost me. Friends who would join me for lunch have come to hate me. I can't wait for all this to end so I can see my children.'

Paulos Seid, sprayer and father

'I have three kids. I live with my husband. I have high blood pressure, but I can't afford to stop working. I've given the responsibility to God. We will be tested under the pressure until this is over. We're not going anywhere.'

Demoz

'I've fought in the Ethio-Eritrean war. I'm doing my national duty as a sprayer and guard. I also help bury those who've died in the pandemic. Spraying chemicals is nothing. I've gone through wars with bullets. So I am not at all afraid of death.'
Workneh Hora, sprayer and father

'When I think of the virus, I think of people I love. I have no guarantee my mother will not be in this hospital bed next. Or my friends. It's very painful. I will continue to serve until my last minute alive because I am here for a reason.'
Makeda, critical-care nurse

Regime tactics fail to stop huge crowds protesting in Belarus

Luke Harding and agencies

Huge protests took place across Belarus yesterday against the embattled regime of Alexander Lukashenko, with demonstrators marching on the presidential palace in the capital, Minsk, for the fourth weekend in a row.

More than 100,000 people filled Independence Avenue, calling for Lukashenko to step down. There were similar marches in other cities including Brest, Vitebsk and Grodno.

Riot police sealed off the centre of Minsk with barriers and armoured personnel carriers. Officers wearing balaclavas arrested and beat several male demonstrators, dragging them into vans. At least one person was taken away in an ambulance.

But there were few signs that the regime's heavy-handed tactics were working. Protests have gone on for nearly a month, following the country's presidential election on 9 August, which was widely seen as rigged.

"The majority don't believe in those in power. They reject the result of the election. A lot of people thought the protests would stop in the first week. They didn't," said Barys Goretsky of Belarus's journalism association. He added: "We are optimistic. We will keep going."

Goretksy said protests were now happening every day, with residents gathering in courtyards and apartment blocks to express their anger with Lukashenko, who has ruled for 26 years.

The regime was still targeting reporters, he said, with three arrested on Saturday and one still in jail.

Masked riot police raided a university in Minsk last week, detaining students who had returned for the beginning of term in violent scenes. Most were subsequently released.

Demonstrators at yesterday's march of unity waved red and white flags, a symbol of opposition to the regime. They chanted "Lukashenko - to the police van", "Lukashenka - to the prison toilet", and "This is our city".

"Sponsor of our public holiday - Putishenko," one banner read, in a jibe aimed at the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, and his support for Lukashenko. The crowd made jokes about whether Lukashenko would show up with a gun following his appearance a week ago when he descended from a helicopter wearing a flak jacket and holding a weapon.

100,000

Number of demonstrators estimated to have marched on the presidential palace in Minsk yesterday

Lukashenko has blamed the protests on the west and claimed erroneously that Nato troops are massing on Belarus's borders. He is due shortly to fly to Moscow for talks with Putin. The two men have spoken frequently on the phone.

The Kremlin has long found Lukashenko to be a frustrating partner, but appears to have decided to prop him up rather than to allow the demonstrators to push him from power. Russia's prime minister, Mikhail Mishustin, visited Minsk last week and said Belarus should not give in to "external pressure".

In an apparent attempt to ingratiate himself with Moscow, Lukashenko released details of a tape that he said his security services had intercepted. It was claimed that it was of a call between Berlin and Warsaw, in which Germany admitted fabricating the novichok poisoning of the Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Last month Putin said in an interview that he had put together a special reserve of Russian law enforcement forces ready to fly to Belarus at short notice should the situation "get out of control".

▲ *A woman is draped in the red and white flag carried by opponents of President Alexander Lukashenko during protests in Belarus's capital, Minsk* PHOTOGRAPH: AP

▲ *Alexei Navalny was poisoned with novichok, Germany said last week*

German threat of EU sanctions against Russia over Navalny

Agence France-Presse
Berlin

Germany, the current head of the European Union, will discuss possible sanctions on Russia over the poisoning of Alexei Navalny if the Kremlin does not provide an explanation soon, its foreign minister said yesterday.

The Russian opposition leader fell ill on a flight last month and was treated in a Siberian hospital before being evacuated to Berlin. The German chancellor, Angela Merkel, said last week there was "unequivocal evidence" the vocal critic of president Vladimir Putin had been poisoned using the Soviet-era nerve agent novichok.

The foreign minister, Heiko Maas, told the German daily Bild yesterday: "If in the coming days Russia does not help clarify what happened, we will be compelled to discuss a response with our allies." Any sanctions decided should be "targeted", he added, and he did not rule out action relating to the disputed Nord Stream 2 pipeline.

The €10bn (£8.7bn) pipeline is meant to deliver Russian gas to Europe, but the project has been strongly criticised by the United States. "I hope ... that the Russians do not force us to change our position on Nord Stream," Maas said, adding that the consequences of any potential cancellation of the project would also need to be considered, and that the debate on sanctions should not be "reduced" to one point.

Western leaders and many Russians have expressed horror at what Navalny's allies say is the first-known use of chemical weapons against a high-profile opposition leader on Russian soil. The Kremlin has denied responsibility for the attack, and the foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, has said Germany had not yet shared any findings with Moscow's prosecutors.

Maas said there were "several indications" that Russia was behind the poisoning, in the strongest accusations yet from Germany: "The deadly substance with which Navalny was poisoned has in the past been found in the hands of Russian authorities.

"Only a small number of people have access to novichok, and this poison was used by Russian secret services in the attack against former agent Sergei Skripal," he added, referring to the 2018 attack in Salisbury.

Hundreds arrested on day of Hong Kong's cancelled election

Helen Davidson
Hong Kong

On what was supposed to have been Hong Kong's election day, hundreds of pro-democracy protesters took to the streets yesterday, where they were met with a heavy presence from police, who fired pepper pellets and arrested nearly 300 people.

It was one of the largest gatherings of protesters since China's implementation of the national security law, a sweeping set of anti-sedition laws that a coalition of UN expert groups has said risks breaching multiple international laws and human rights.

▲ *A Hong Kong police officer instructs a protester during a rally yesterday*

In July the Hong Kong government announced it was postponing the legislative council election for one year because of the dangers posed by a new outbreak of the coronavirus. However, the decision was met with derision by pro-democracy figures and opposition politicians, who accused the government of using the pandemic to delay an election it could potentially lose.

Yesterday hundreds rallied against the crackdown and the delay of the vote, initially in Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok, Kowloon. Many protesters called for the release of 12 people arrested by Chinese coastguards while attempting to flee to Taiwan.

In response to the crowds, which included a large media contingent, police fired pepper pellets and raised warning flags. Several journalists reported being targeted by police and detained or ordered home under threat of arrest.

The Facebook page of Figo Chan, the vice-convenor of the Civil Human Rights Front activist group, said Chan, Raphael Wong Ho-ming and the former legislator Leung Kwok-hung were among those arrested.

Dismay and fear in Egypt as witnesses in landmark rape case are arrested

Ruth Michaelson

Egyptian security forces have arrested six witnesses, including three women, in an investigation into an alleged gang-rape case, which was previously hailed as a watershed moment for women's rights.

Feminist campaigners and a researcher from the international organisation Human Rights Watch said six people had been arrested overnight in their homes by the country's national security agency (NSA), including a woman seized from her car. Another was arrested at her holiday home after the NSA could not find her at her Cairo address.

Campaigners in contact with the detainees said that some of the women had been forced to undergo vaginal examinations and the men anal examinations while in custody.

The group of witnesses were threatened with charges of "violating Egyptian family values", "damaging Egypt's public image" and "debauchery", a charge frequently used to target members of the LGBTQ community.

"It's a terrifying moment for the LGBTQ and the feminist community," said Amr Magdi, a researcher at Human Rights Watch.

The three detained women had previously provided witness testimony in an investigation into an alleged gang rape in 2014; two men were arrested with them.

Another man, a prominent event organiser, was detained in connection with the party at a central Cairo hotel six years ago, where a group of wealthy men allegedly filmed themselves gang-raping the woman at the centre of the ongoing investigation.

One of the detained women holds dual American-Egyptian citizenship. The US embassy has been contacted for comment.

Last month, Egypt's public prosecutor issued arrest warrants for nine men. Activists said seven were connected to the alleged rape, while two were accused of other sexual assaults. The Egyptian authorities asked Interpol to seek the arrest of seven men who fled the country, leading to the arrest of three in Lebanon. Two more were detained in Egypt. None has commented publicly on the charges against them.

> ***'We went from pride to terror in a matter of hours. It seems like they want to scare us into silence'***
>
> **Women's rights campaigner**

The authorities' move was hailed as a landmark moment by campaigners, who sought rare justice for survivors of sexual violence in Egypt. Months of grassroots organising led to pressure on the authorities to detain and charge another prominent individual accused of multiple rapes, while MPs drafted laws to protect survivor testimony.

The government's National Council for Women (NCW), a body affiliated with the Egyptian presidency, urged survivors and witnesses to come forward, promising them support and protection. Yet the state soon moved to crush the attempt to bring down powerful men accused of sexual assault, and quickly widened the crackdown to target members of the LGBTQ community, feminists or simply elite partygoers. After the detentions, campaigners and their supporters fell silent online, fearing attack or arrest.

"We went from being very proud to being terrified in a matter of a few hours," said one activist, who could not be named for her own safety.

"It seems like they're taking people to scare us into silence. The message from the state is: 'You wanted a women's revolution - this is what it looks like.' Girls are going to bed with their clothes on in case someone comes into their house [to arrest them]."

Egypt's public prosecution office issued a cryptic statement on the witnesses' arrests, labelling them suspects. Prosecutors said three people were released on bail after investigators subjected them all to drug tests and seized their mobile phones.

Activists hit out at the NCW, which they said had abruptly cut contact after the arrests. "I feel betrayed, absolutely betrayed. I think Maya Morsy should step down immediately," said one activist, referring to the head of the NCW.

Morsy did not respond when contacted by the Guardian. A second NCW member also declined to comment.

After security forces seized witnesses' phones, compromising pictures and video were leaked on to social media, accompanied by a smear campaign across local pro-government websites intended to discredit campaigners and witnesses.

"What's happening is a loud message that if you speak up, your life will be destroyed," said one activist. He pointed to the contrast between earlier messages to witnesses, "that you will be protected, you will be anonymous", and renewed efforts to shame campaigners against sexual violence.

"Who in their right mind would report a predator now?" he asked.

▼ *Part of a mural in San Salvador in tribute to the six priests, housekeeper and her daughter, murdered in 1989*

PHOTOGRAPH: MARVIN RECINOS/AFP/GETTY

El Salvador Thirty years on, trial offers some justice for victims of civil war atrocity

Sam Jones
Madrid

A few hours before he was shot dead in the campus garden of his university in San Salvador, Ignacio Martín-Baró rang his family back in Spain to let them know everything was OK.

"It's all fine," the Jesuit academic and psychologist told his parents. "The army is all around us."

The next morning, Martín-Baró was dead, murdered by an army death squad along with five Jesuit colleagues, a housekeeper and her 15-year-old daughter. The priests, five of them Spanish, became some of the best-known victims of El Salvador's civil war, the 12-year conflict between the US-backed military junta and the leftwing guerrillas of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) that cost more than 75,000 lives.

While the US and the Salvadorian military fought to snuff out what they saw as a communist uprising, the Jesuits, who worked at the Central American University (UCA) in San Salvador, sought a negotiated peace. Looking back to the events of 16 November 1989, Martín-Baró's elder brother, Carlos, thinks he knows what Ignacio - or Nacho - was up to when he called home for the last time.

"It was a very Nacho way of telling them not to worry but it wasn't without irony," says Carlos. "He also spoke to my sister Alicia that night and held up the receiver and told her to listen to the firefight outside. I think it was an elegant, ironic way for him to say goodbye to them and to life itself."

Today, more than three decades after that farewell, Carlos is quietly hopeful that Nacho and the seven others killed in one of the most infamous atrocities of the civil war may finally receive some measure of posthumous justice.

Using proceedings brought under the principle of universal jurisdiction - which allows human rights crimes committed in one country to be investigated in another - a former Salvadorian army colonel who was also a security minister has been on trial in Madrid, accused of involvement in "the decision, design and execution" of the murders.

During nine sessions in June and July, Inocente Orlando Montano sat in a wheelchair in the Spanish courtroom, a blue mask covering his mouth, and argued his innocence. Yes, he told the court, he had been a member of La Tandona, a group of violent and corrupt senior army officers whose members had risen to the top of El Salvador's political and military elite.

▲ *The former army colonel Inocente Orlando Montano, on trial in Madrid*

But Montano insisted he had "nothing against the Jesuits". Nor had he ever participated in a meeting where plans were hatched to kill the priests and blame their deaths on the FMLN in an attempt to derail peace talks that would have curtailed La Tandona's power and reach.

His claims, however, were contradicted by René Yusshy Mendoza, a former Salvadorian soldier who acted as a prosecution witness. He told the court that members of the military high command - including Montano - had met and decided "drastic" measures were needed to tackle the FMLN guerrillas and their sympathisers.

On the night of 15 November 1989, Mendoza added, he and others were informed that the order had been given to "eliminate" the UCA's rector, Father Ignacio Ellacuría, a liberation theologian and a pivotal figure in the push for peace.

The next day, members of the elite, US-trained counter-insurgency Atlacatl battalion entered the priests' lodgings and Ellacuría, 59, was shot dead, as were Nacho Martín-Baró, 47; Segundo Montes, 56; Juan Ramón Moreno, 56; Amando López, 53; and Joaquin López y López, 71. The death squad then murdered Julia Elba Ramos, 42, and her daughter, Celina, 15.

A verdict is expected this month.

For Carlos, the trial has not been about revenge, nor hatred, but about an end to impunity. Thirty years have done nothing to lessen his love for his brother, nor his pride in Nacho's achievements.

Carlos will remember his brother as a man whose heart was rivalled in size only by his intelligence, and as a scholar and teacher.

"But I have moved forward and understood, with a deep sadness, how those soldiers cut him down. This is how I have lived my brother's life and death. And I'm still living it."

Germany

Post-Covid consensual politics may help Greens

▼ *German Greens' co-leaders Robert Habeck and Annalena Baerbock visit a renewable energy power plant*
PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTIAN CHARISIUS/DPA

Philip Oltermann
Berlin

In a pandemic, public health takes precedence over the wellbeing of the planet, as Germany's Greens have had to learn the hard way: with Covid-19 shoring up electoral sympathies for Angela Merkel, the buoyant upstarts in opposition have lost much of the momentum they had previously built up.

And yet the environmental party's chances of entering government in 2021 have never looked greater.

The German Greens, who formed a government with the centre-left Social Democratic party (SPD) between 1998 and 2005, have renewed their profile and electoral hopes. Under the leadership of Annalena Baerbock and Robert Habeck, in charge since January 2018, Die Grünen have sought to do away with the image of a single-issue protest party in favour of that of a consensus-builder steering Germany not just through the climate crisis but wider societal shifts.

Last summer the party achieved historic gains in the European parliamentary election and challenged Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) for the top spot in national polls. But the coronavirus pandemic once again relegated the Greens to the status of a support act. Electoral reward for the country's comparatively competent pandemic management has above all fallen to the conservative CDU.

Co-leader Habeck's pitch, put forward in his 2016 book *Wer wagt, beginnt* (Who Dares, Begins), is that the old left-right axis is making way for a new scale of open and closed political systems, and that the Greens are best placed to address challenges that fall outside orthodox creeds of political faith.

But during a pandemic in which the debate has shrunk to arguments about degrees of economic shutdown, the Greens have been able to make few incisive interventions. "Corona has shown us that the politics of wealth distribution still matter, and that is a question where other parties find it more natural to provide answers than the Greens," said Prof Wolfgang Merkel, a political scientist at Berlin's Humboldt University.

The pandemic has highlighted a division between those who can afford to work from home and those forced to risk exposure to the virus on the assembly line and supermarket till, said Merkel. The German Greens, with a disproportionately high number of academics among their members, may struggle to present themselves as neutral brokers.

Yet the Green vote in polls has not collapsed: most surveys still show the party at 17-20% of the vote and second behind the CDU, a vast improvement on a meagre 8.9% at federal elections in 2017.

> ***'Corona has shown us that the politics of wealth distribution still matter'***
>
> **Prof Wolfgang Merkel**
> *Humboldt University*

While Covid-19 has boosted support for Merkel's CDU to a three-year high, polls still foresee Germany's conservatives requiring a coalition partner to obtain a governing majority at the next elections, expected to be held in autumn 2021.

Appetite for another power-sharing deal with the Social Democrats remains low following a lacklustre second term. And the collapse of talks between the CDU, the Greens and the pro-business FDP in 2017 has dampened enthusiasm for three-way coalitions in general, not just among the conservatives but also the Greens.

> **17–20%**
> *Share of the vote recorded for the German Green party in recent polls, putting them second behind the CDU*

Armin Laschet and Norbert Röttgen, two old Merkel allies in the running for the party leadership, were both members of a circle of young liberal conservatives who sought a dialogue with the Green party as early as the 1990s, known as the "pizza connection" because early meetings were held in an Italian restaurant.

Even the veteran Christian Democrat Friedrich Merz, supposedly the candidate of choice for conservative hardliners, has softened his rhetoric in recent weeks. It was possible, Merz told Der Spiegel, that a coalition with the Greens would emerge as the only "stable option".

The two parties, he added, were not as much of an odd couple as they looked: "Black [the traditional colour of the CDU] and green has long been around the breakfast table in many middle-class families."

French ecology alliance looks to regions after city victories

Jon Henley
Paris

Regional and presidential elections in France over the next two years will show whether the "green wave" that surged through a series of big cities this summer heralded a fundamental redrawing of its politics.

Alone or at the head of leftwing majorities, the Europe Écologie-Les Verts party (EELV) seized Annecy, Besançon, Bordeaux, Lyon, Poitiers and Strasbourg, and made winning coalitions in Paris and Marseille in June's municipal elections.

Yannick Jadot, an MEP and one of the EELV's most senior figures, said the results revealed "a desire for concrete ecology in action". The party feels its local victories in former bastions of both the left and right show the foundations of French politics are shifting. The winning formula, it believes, lies in a broad political offering in coalition with other leftist parties around the themes of ecology, social solidarity and a more representative democracy.

Some analysts think EELV may be right. Since Emmanuel Macron blew up France's political landscape in 2017, crushing the main centre-left and centre-right parties, most have assumed the 2022 presidential race would be a repeat of his face-off with the far-right Marine Le Pen.

However, EELV has attracted disappointed left-leaning Macron voters, and its success reflects voters' search for new forms of political expression beyond the left-right divide, according to Brice Teinturier of the polling firm Ipsos. "In 2017, that benefited Macron. This time it was the Greens who looked different."

Macron is not giving EELV a free ride: the president recently accepted all but three of 149 recommendations of a citizens' commission for the climate and has made green investment central to France's mammoth €100bn (£90bn) post-Covid recovery plan.

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Financial

Larry Elliott
Britain counts cost of Covid lockdown
Page 29

Jobs and skills at risk unless furlough is extended, say manufacturers

Joanna Partridge

The government's furlough scheme must be extended for critical sectors of British industry or the country risks losing key skills as it recovers from the pandemic, according to Britain's foremost manufacturing group.

Make UK is joining calls for the government to change its mind about ending the coronavirus job retention scheme in autumn, after a survey of its members showed almost two-thirds (62%) agreed it should be extended.

The call comes after the outgoing head of the CBI business lobby group, Carolyn Fairbairn, urged the government to create a successor to the scheme to preserve jobs.

Nearly a quarter of companies surveyed said they disagreed with the decision to end the furlough scheme and felt it should be extended to critical sectors, while 17% said it should be extended for all businesses.

The scheme has paid 80% of the wages of 9.6 million workers, up to £2,500 a month, since it was launched in March, and has also supported 2.6 million self-employed people. From this month, businesses have to pay employers' national insurance and pension contributions for furloughed staff, as well as 10% of their wages, rising to 20% next month.

The scheme will finish at the end of October, although the government will pay a job-retention bonus of £1,000 for every worker brought back from furlough and employed until January.

Make UK, which represents 20,000 companies, said extending the furlough scheme may help avoid a wave of redundancies after October.

More than two-fifths of companies said they had already cut jobs, and a third said they intended to make workers redundant in the next six months.

In another survey released today, the business advisory firm BDO found more than half of medium-sized businesses were planning job cuts once the furlough scheme ends.

The chief executive of Make UK, Stephen Phipson, said an extension for the most-affected sectors, such as the aviation and automotive industries, was needed to prevent the loss of skills, which would set the UK at a disadvantage internationally. "The protection of key skills should be a strategic national priority as this will be the first building block in getting the economy up and running," he said.

A Treasury spokesman said: "We can't sustain this situation indefinitely and must now focus on providing fresh work opportunities for those in need."

PHOTOGRAPH: SWNS/ ALEXANDER M HOWE

Boeing, Boeing, gone ... A row of Boeing 747s in British Airways livery lined up on the tarmac at a plane-scrapping centre in Gloucestershire at the weekend. British Airways announced in July that it was retiring its entire fleet of 747s because of the travel downturn. Up to 50 jets are now waiting at Air Salvage International, where they will either be sold or dismantled for parts.

TUC calls for pay-rise pledge to lowest earners to be honoured

Gwyn Topham

The head of the TUC has denounced a possible freezing of the minimum wage as "totally wrong", as the Treasury reportedly considers backtracking on a planned pay rise for the lowest-paid workers.

The hourly pay rate under the "national living wage" - the legal minimum paid to workers over 25 - was due to rise 6.2% from £8.72 to £9.21 in April, under targets set last December.

However, there is speculation that the planned increase may be abandoned as unaffordable, or at least reduced, with unemployment expected to rise sharply in the autumn as Britain confronts the economic price of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Sunday Telegraph reported that ministers and officials have discussed applying an "emergency brake".

Frances O'Grady, the general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, said: "Many key workers who have got us through this crisis - including care workers and supermarket staff - are on the minimum wage. It would be totally wrong to freeze their pay.

"The government must not renege upon its commitment to raise the minimum wage. Millions of low-paid workers are struggling to make ends meet. That's not right during a pandemic - or at any time."

She said the government should raise the minimum wage to the same level as the "real living wage", a voluntary measure paid by nearly 6,000 businesses that is pegged at £10.75 in London and £9.30 elsewhere.

A consultation by the Low Pay Commission seeking employers' views on the affordability of the changes to the national living wage should have closed in June, but has been extended due to the exceptional circumstances.

It is understood that some members of the commission, an independent body that advises the government on rates, will advocate a freeze when the panel meets in late October.

That recommendation will inform the autumn budget to be announced the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, and could see lower-paid workers losing out with the Treasury considering tax rises to plug the holes in finances after months of inactivity and the cost of furloughing millions of workers.

▲ *The TUC's Frances O'Grady said the minimum wage needed to go up*

The government pledged that the national living wage would rise to £10.50 an hour by 2024 and to extend its remit, with the basic entitlement starting at age 23 rather than 25. But the policy was set with a clause pinning it to economic growth, meaning the government could opt to pause its plan during the recession.

The chairman of the Low Pay Commission, Bryan Sanderson, told the Sunday Telegraph that the pandemic meant "an emergency brake" might be needed. He said advice to government was always based on a thorough review of evidence, which was "more important than ever, given the profound impact of Covid-19".

He added: "There are not many winners in today's uncertain world. Our contribution to help steer a path through the complexity will be to provide a recommendation founded on rigorous research and competent analysis, which has the support of academics and both sides of industry."

A spokesman for the manufacturer's organisation Make UK said firms would back moves to keep the national living wage down. "Any measure which can reduce the cost pressure on business will be supported by those companies facing a battle to stay afloat and protect jobs at all levels," he said.

Streaming

How Covid allowed a startup to take over Napster

Mark Sweney
Media business correspondent

'Going up against a Spotify ... I don't think anyone wants to be doing that," says Anthony Matchett, the new owner of Napster. Last month, the 32-year old's London-based music tech startup, MelodyVR, made waves announcing a surprise $70m (£52m) reverse takeover of the pioneer of the streaming revolution.

Matchett is hoping that a marriage of MelodyVR, which films and streams gigs, with the 21-year-old Napster will be music to the ears, and eyes, of fans and investors alike. "There is something very apt about a disruptive company that works with technology like MelodyVR and the original music industry disrupter," he says. "We see synergies for a service that combines music streaming, immersive content, live events. Something that an Apple Music, a Spotify, or any other service doesn't provide. Everything a music fan might really want."

For the time being the two firms will operate separately, although Matchett does not rule out a potential renaming of his AIM-listed company to the well-known Napster brand in the future.

It is the fourth incarnation of Napster, founded in 1999 when Britney Spears and Backstreet Boys topped the charts, and it is now a relative minnow among the global music streamers. Napster, with 3 million subscribers, delivered 10.8bn streams and made $113m in revenue last year. "It is a shame because a lot of people don't realise they have a thriving business," says an undeterred Matchett. "Although it is not the scale of a Spotify, it is growing and it is profitable; we are delighted to acquire it".

He is right to be confident. After more than a decade of plummeting CD sales and rampant piracy, the streaming revolution has put the music business back at the top of the charts for investors. Last year, global music sales grew for a fifth consecutive year, to $20.2bn, driven by a 23% growth in streaming (which accounted for $11.4bn of the total), having hit a low of $14bn in 2013.

Another British success is Hipgnosis, a London-listed company offering the chance to make money from the royalties of songs by artists from Beyoncé to Bon Jovi. Investors have been happy to front up more than £230m during the pandemic to allow it to continue its music catalogue buying spree. The music majors are also doing well. Earlier this summer Warner Music, the world's third largest music company and home to artists including Ed Sheeran, floated in the US, selling $1.9bn worth of shares, achieving a market value of more than $12bn.

Len Blavatnik paid just $3.3bn for the company in 2011. Universal Music, home of stars including Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga and the Beatles, sold a 10% stake to Chinese tech giant Tencent, valuing the business at €30bn (£26.7bn).

And while the live music industry has ground to a halt, streaming has proved virus-proof. Spotify, the largest music-streaming service, reported a jump in subscribers of more than 27% year-on-year to 138m in the second quarter.

The lockdown has also been good to MelodyVR, which has raised almost $30m from investors. "I probably wouldn't phrase it in that way, but that said, naturally as a virtual events company we are one business that is continuing to grow," says Matchett. "Since the start of coronavirus our app installs and our usage has gone through the roof. We have seen a lot more people looking for live music. Our app installs are up 1,000% since the start of quarantine. And our month-on-month usage is growing at 36%."

The company set up safe studios in London and Los Angeles to enable artists to perform gigs, with fans paying to watch via its app. The gigs can also be watched on virtual reality headsets, which allows fans to choose where in the auditorium they watch from. The company has had 100 artists perform virtual gigs during lockdown, including Emeli Sandé, Liam Payne, the Chainsmokers and Cypress Hill.

It also has a back catalogue of gigs performed in front of live audiences. To date the company has charged on a per-gig basis, the average price being £9.99, but is now belatedly adding a monthly subscription option, the preferred model for digital-content services from Netflix and Spotify to pay-TV.

"When we launched, no one had really seen immersive or VR content and no one knew what it was worth," says Matchett. "We didn't want to over-price or under-price. Now we are in a place we feel confident about launching a monthly fee."

While swallowing Napster has transformed the scale of its business, the Soho-based company has some way to go to reach profitability. Last year it made a loss of £16m and revenues plunged to £200,000, while Napster's thin margins meant the streaming firm made just $1.8m in profits. "[Profitability] is not something we are worried about," says Matchett. "For a company like us, growth and investment is key, which is why we are buying Napster." The new MelodyVR/Napster combo is banking on the business of music staying on song.

▲ *Liam Payne, one of about 100 artists who have performed virtual gigs on MelodyVR during lockdown. Using VR headsets allows fans to pick their view. Below, Emeli Sandé*

PHOTOGRAPH: LUKE DYSON/MELODYVR

$70m

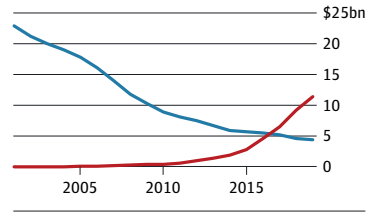
The amount the British newcomer MelodyVR is paying for the 'original music industry disrupter' Napster

$20.2bn

Global music sales last year, up for the fifth consecutive year - propelled by growth of 23% in streaming

Global streaming market was worth $11.4bn in revenues last year

Global revenue, $bn



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Analysis
Larry Elliott

High price of the Covid-19 lockdown in Britain raises questions for the future

Cancer treatments cancelled. Children deprived of schooling. More cases of domestic abuse. Continued restrictions on personal freedom. Over and above the direct damage caused to the economy, the collateral damage from the Covid-19 pandemic has been colossal.

And the crisis is not over by any means. Travel restrictions come and go with mind-boggling frequency. Local quarantines have replaced national lockdowns. Every leading policymaker in the UK, from the chancellor, Rishi Sunak, downwards, knows that the job losses to come threaten to leave permanent scars.

An obvious question, therefore, is was it worth it? Have the costs of shutting down a great chunk of Britain for three months and leaving many restrictions in place after six months been outweighed by the benefits?

An obvious answer is that this is the wrong question to ask, because you can't measure the value of a human life in terms of gross domestic product, the unemployment rate or the size of the national debt. The tough action taken at the end of March saved lives.

By the same token, though, it is impossible to put a price on the fact that the number of cancer referrals fell by 70% in April, that there were hardly any follow-up appointments for people with long-term conditions and elective admissions dropped by 75%.

What's more, the government does put a monetary value on a life when it comes to deciding on resource decisions regarding medical care. It does this by estimating the number of years of life that will be saved adjusted for quality of life. A quality-adjusted life year is valued at £30,000.

Using this figure and estimates for the direct hit to the economy caused by the pandemic, a team of researchers including David Miles, a former member of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, have had a go at assessing the benefits of the lockdown against the costs.*

This is by no means a simple process. Firstly, it is unclear how big the loss of output will be from the Covid-19 recession, and estimates of the length and the depth of the slump are changing all the time. Secondly, nobody is sure how many lives were saved as a result of the lockdown. Finally, the £30,000 figure for a quality-adjusted life year might be too low, even leaving aside all of the ethical considerations in making such a calculation.

To allow for these difficulties, Miles and his colleagues used a range of estimates for the number of lives that might have been lost in the absence of a lockdown, and for the drop in GDP caused by the Covid-19 recession.

The trigger for the imposition of the lockdown was the prediction from Prof Neil Ferguson of Imperial College London that 500,000 lives would be lost unless tough restrictions were imposed. In their paper, using data from the summer, Miles et al say the number of excess deaths in Britain caused by the pandemic was 60,000. Subtracting that number from Ferguson's 500,000 leaves an estimate of 440,000 saved lives.

▲ *The Bank of England in the heart of London's financial district in May. A new study estimates the lockdown cost the UK economy about £130bn*
PHOTOGRAPH: NEIL HALL/EPA

Based on the ages of those who died from Covid-19, the Miles study assumes the loss of 10 quality-adjusted life years on average, each valued at £30,000. That generates a value for potential years of life saved at £132bn. The figure falls to £30bn if 100,000 lives were saved by the lockdown, and to £6bn if 20,000 lives were saved.

Early estimates that Britain was heading for a slump unparalleled since the first decade of the 18th century have proved too pessimistic. Instead of a 14% drop in national output, the latest forecast from the Bank of England is for a 9.5% contraction, making it merely the worst recession since the one after the end of the first world war.

The value of Britain's annual output is roughly £2tn, so a 9.5% drop in GDP is worth £190bn. Obviously there would have been a drop in GDP even without a formal lockdown because people would have taken their own precautions.

Miles and his colleagues assume that the lockdown was responsible for two-thirds of the damage, leaving a monetary cost of just under £130bn. That figure doesn't take into account any further setbacks to the economy or the health and education costs.

This is all very well, but did the government have a choice? Wouldn't going down the Swedish route, a country where far less stringent measures were imposed by the government, have led to Ferguson's predictions coming true?

This is explored in another study, by Rickard Nyman and Paul Ormerod, in which they look at the difference between Covid-19 cases and deaths in Sweden and England and Wales.

> *The latest forecast, for a 9.5% contraction, makes it merely the worst recession since the one after the end of the first world war*

Deaths in both Sweden and England and Wales peaked on the same day – 8 April – and by early August they were again similar. In between, however, the number of deaths in England and Wales was initially higher than in Sweden but then fell more quickly.

In the early stages of the pandemic, there were estimates that Sweden would have 80,000 deaths as a result of not imposing a lockdown. In the event, the total stands at just under 6,000. Nyman and Ormerod estimate that the UK lockdown saved 17,700 lives in England and Wales, which they scale up to 20,000 for the UK as a whole.

If that estimate is anywhere near right, there are some obvious conclusions: namely that Britain has paid a very high price for tackling Covid-19; and the government needs to think long and hard before ever resorting to a blanket shutdown during this pandemic or any that may follow.

**The UK lockdown: Balancing costs against benefits. VoxEU/CEPR*

Campaigners challenge UK's $1bn pledge to gas project in Mozambique

Jillian Ambrose
Energy correspondent

Friends of the Earth is mounting a legal challenge against the government's decision to offer $1bn (£750m) in financial support to a major fossil-fuel project in Mozambique, which the green group claims is incompatible with the Paris climate agreement.

The campaigners will go to the high court this week to seek a judicial review of the decision to use British taxpayers' money to "worsen the climate emergency" by helping to finance a $20bn gas project in Mozambique.

Friends of the Earth said the government's export credit agency, UK Export Finance (UKEF), offered its largest single financial support package without a transparent assessment of the project's environmental and social risks, which is a legal requirement.

UKEF has granted loan guarantees, and direct funding, to British companies bidding for work on fossil fuel projects worth more than £3.5bn since the UK signed up to the Paris climate agreement, which commits to keeping global heating below 2C.

Last year MPs on the environmental audit committee called for an end to government support for polluting projects overseas, saying it "undermines the UK's climate commitments".

Will Rundle, the head of legal at Friends of the Earth, said: "It concerns us greatly that our taxpayer money is being used to worsen the climate emergency in this way, and the Department for International Trade appears to have pushed this decision through without adequate transparency or environmental due diligence, in line with their policies and legal requirements.

"The climate hypocrisy of this government is astounding," he said. "On the one hand it claims to be a climate leader and on the other we are providing $1bn in taxpayer financial support to a new gas mega-project that will sabotage all our efforts to stop climate breakdown."

Rundle said the government had "refused to disclose any meaningful information" on its assessment of the project's environmental impact.

A spokeswoman for UKEF said the agency had conducted a review of the project covering environmental, social and human rights impacts, which considered its impact on the climate.

$20bn
The total value of the Mozambique scheme, which Friends of the Earth says will worsen the climate crisis

2,000
The number of UK jobs the export credit agency says will be supported by its involvement in the gas project

Rowan Smith, a lawyer at Leigh Day, said the government had "a clear obligation" to disclose how the project would impact the environment.

"Friends of the Earth considers that the government has breached its own policy, and in making the investment has failed to properly consider the Paris agreement, which requires the UK to drastically and quickly divest from fossil fuel infrastructure," he said. The group would argue that the investment also breached "other international law standards on the environment and human rights in violation of government commitments".

UKEF has claimed its involvement in the Mozambique project will support more than 2,000 UK jobs.

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Inside the Guardian

▼ *People training in Johannesburg after South Africa's strictest lockdown measures were eased in May*

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHELE SPATARI/AFP/GETTY

▲ *President Ramaphosa emphasised the threat from coronavirus*

Covering Covid in Africa 'A virus cannot stop this life and energy'

Jason Burke
Eshowe, South Africa

In the evening I went for a run, down to the gate from my guesthouse, past a huddle of round huts and through the fields of sugar cane to the lake. A dog barked, a child howled, someone laughed, and tinny music played somewhere in the gathering darkness.

Eshowe, a small town in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, is a place of astonishing natural beauty. The run did not last long. I stopped and watched as weavers, glossy starlings and sunbirds swooped through the trees, catching the last rays of the sun. To the north, low dry hills lined the horizon. To the south, the breakers of the Indian Ocean crashed on miles of wild shore. Eshowe was memorable for something else too: the very human suffering I found there, and equally human hope.

That was my last moment of relative freedom before the Covid-19 pandemic struck South Africa. Even as I flew down from my home in Johannesburg to drive up to Eshowe, the first cases were being reported across the continent I have been covering for the Guardian and the Observer for more than four years. It was far too early to know what this new outbreak would mean for South Africa or anywhere else, but if anywhere had any answers, Eshowe would.

I was there to report a different epidemic. Eshowe had been a centre of the HIV crisis in South Africa, one of the worst-hit nations in the world. But in recent years the situation was much improved. New drugs, deeper understanding, clever strategies, more resources and a new social tolerance had allowed the community to better manage its tragedy. The contrast between Eshowe's stunning surroundings and the pain of so many in the town was marginally less stark.

I met Sthandwa Buthelezi, an astonishing woman who had lost her parents, daughter and three sisters to HIV but who joyfully told me that "one day there will be no more HIV here, and the people of Eshowe will be free, free, free."

Sthandwa Buthelezi in Eshowe

When Cyril Ramaphosa, the president of South Africa, went on national television to underline the threat Covid-19 posed, he was praised by those who remembered how the dangers of HIV had been denied by previous leaders, with lethal consequences. Support for the lockdown imposed by Ramaphosa – one of the strictest anywhere in the world – was widespread. One legacy of South Africa's long battle with HIV and TB is its wealth of top-class epidemiologists and its community health networks. Both went into action to fight this new threat.

In more than 20 years as a foreign correspondent I have covered many different tragedies: a dozen or so wars, earthquakes and other natural disasters, political calamities of all types. Most recently, I have reported on a small war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, been among civilians in a crowd fired on by soldiers in Zimbabwe, travelled to hunger-hit towns in South Sudan and to cholera-stricken villages in Somalia.

But this was different. All borders were closed; all airports shut. This time there was no possibility of a swift return to a safe European, or other, home, if the crisis became a personal threat. And my status as a journalist was no protection against a virus, nor would it keep my family safe. Even wars or tsunamis are quantifiable in a way this new danger did not seem to be.

Support for the lockdown – one of the strictest anywhere – was widespread

The following weeks were a marathon of WhatsApp or Skype calls to ask contacts and contributors across the continent what was happening where they were. The answers were often cryptic, fragmentary and confused. My job became patching these responses together into something more coherent. The picture that came slowly into focus diverged substantially from that given in local and international media, as well as in the innumerable Zoomed press conferences given by officials.

These tended to be reassuring – or at least not alarmist. The numbers were low, though they could get higher, was the message. But one thing that quickly became clear was that almost all statistics on the continent needed to be treated with extreme caution. Even the more reliable gave an impression of what was happening that was at best partial. Others were downright misleading. Frightened leaders everywhere were deliberately downplaying the extent of infections, well aware of how the pandemic was exposing their own failures to build adequate health systems for their compatriots. In Nigeria, Tanzania, Burundi and Somalia, there were attempts to obscure early outbreaks: but medical professionals, victims, ambulance drivers – even gravediggers – reported a different story.

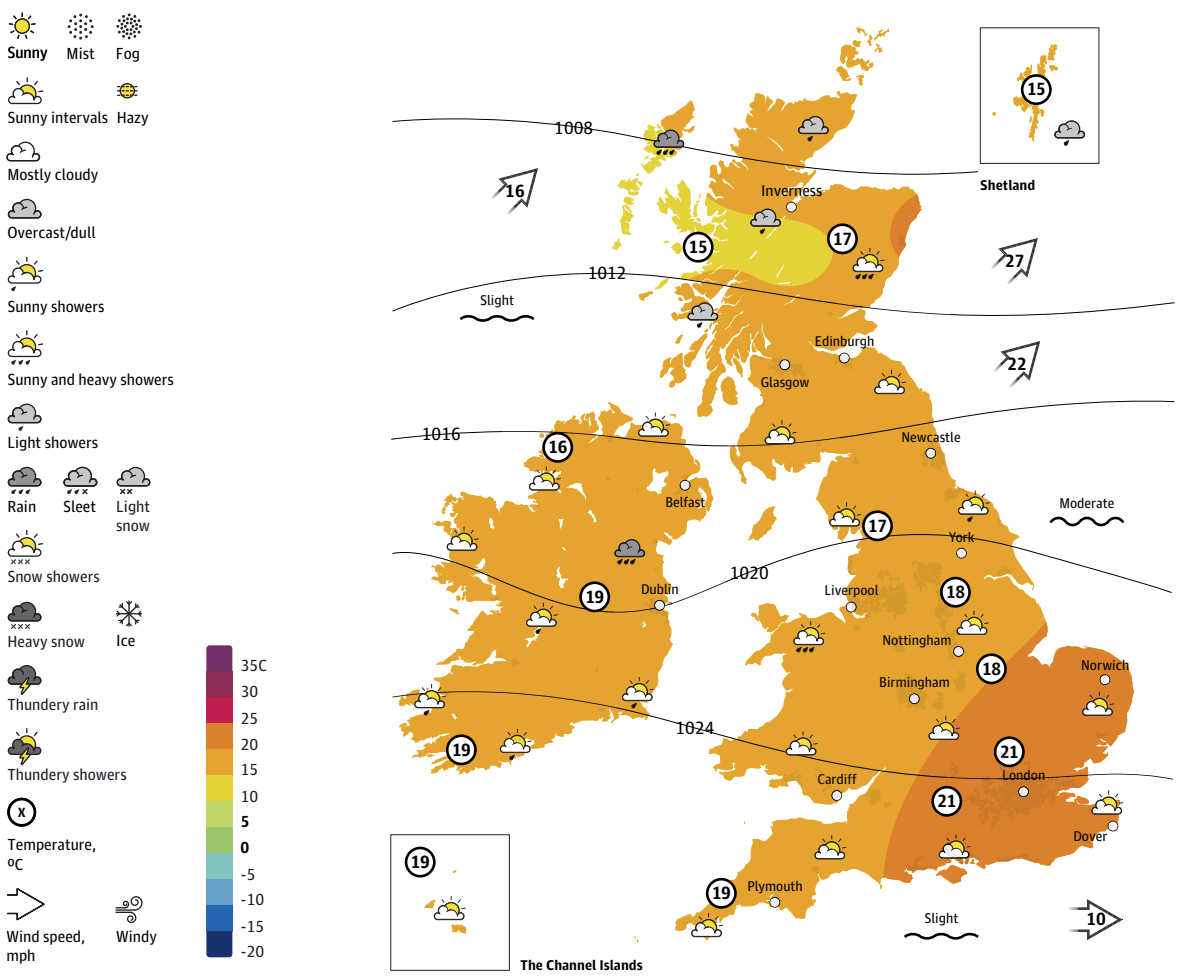
Then there was the human cost of the lockdowns. In wealthy nations, salaries were paid to hundreds of millions at home. Across Africa – in the South African townships of Khayelitsha, Alexandria or Diepsloot, for example, the crowded lanes of Mathare or Kibera in Nairobi, or the barrios of Luanda – there was no safety net. If you didn't work, you didn't eat. Soon the plaintive messages began coming in from friends and contacts in such communities: asking for advice, help, or simply for their plight to be communicated to a global audience. On frontiers across the continent, migrants were stuck, unable to go home, earn money or, very often, access help. Speaking from Djibouti, Abdulfatah Hassan Gedi, 25, a Somali trying to reach the Gulf, described being caught between "a rock and a hard place".

But one thing the pandemic could not stop was the collective life and energy of a billion or so people. As the weeks since the arrival of Covid-19 on the continent became months, there was other news to report: a crackdown on journalists in Zimbabwe, a coup in Mali, the publication of new and important books on the troubled history of South Africa, the defiance of musicians to authoritarian regimes, the disappearance of great white sharks off the Cape of Good Hope.

July was a bleak moment in Johannesburg, with soaring infections and health systems close to being overwhelmed. Now, with the curve apparently flattened, travel between provinces is now allowed. I am thinking of a long drive down to Eshowe. I will go for the beauty, of course, but more for the resilience and the hope.

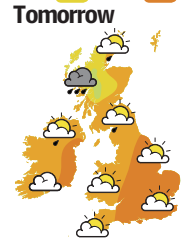
Weather
Monday 7 September 2020

UK and Ireland Noon today

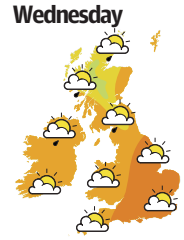


Forecast

Low 15 High 21
Tomorrow



Low 15 High 18
Wednesday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

Latest	
05 Sep 2020	411.36
Weekly average	
30 Aug 2020	411.59
06 Sep 2019	408.82
06 Sep 2010	387.59
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

London
Lows and highs 15 21 | Precipitation 25% | Air pollution Low

Manchester
15 17 | 55% | Low

Edinburgh
12 18 | 60% | Low

Belfast
14 18 | 55% | Low

Birmingham
15 19 | 25% | Low

Brighton
16 20 | 15% | Low

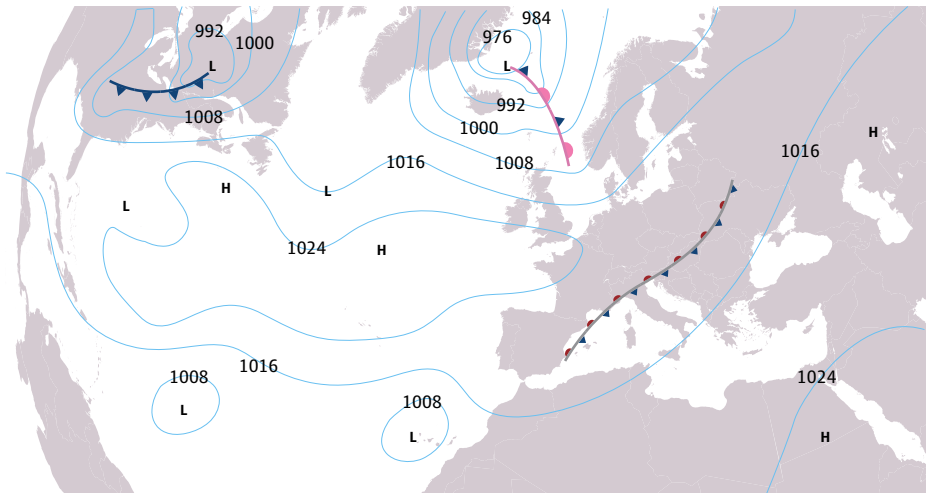
Bristol
14 18 | 25% | Low

Cardiff
14 18 | 25% | Low

Newcastle
14 18 | 75% | Low

Penzance
15 18 | 20% | Low

Atlantic front



High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	0451	4.1m	1722	3.8m	**London Bridge**	0531	6.6m	1744	6.7m
Avonmouth	1052	11.8m	2304	11.7m	**Lossiemouth**	0316	3.9m	1545	3.6m
Barrow	0250	8.7m	1509	8.3m	**Milford Haven**	0950	6.3m	2207	6.3m
Belfast	0242	3.4m	1512	3.2m	**Newquay**	0843	6.3m	2100	6.3m
Cobh	0905	3.7m	2123	3.8m	**North Shields**	0658	4.8m	1927	4.5m
Cromer	0956	4.8m	2234	4.5m	**Oban**	0910	3.6m	2134	3.6m
Dover	0233	6.2m	1441	6.3m	**Penzance**	0815	5.0m	2031	5.1m
Dublin	0300	3.8m	1529	3.6m	**Plymouth**	0928	5.0m	2136	5.0m
Galway	0905	4.5m	2121	4.5m	**Portsmouth**	0259	4.3m	1526	4.4m
Greenock	0404	3.5m	1624	3.3m	**Southport**	0200	8.5m	1416	8.1m
Harwich	0322	3.7m	1529	3.8m	**Stornoway**	1018	4.1m	2236	4.3m
Holyhead	0146	5.3m	1406	5.0m	**Weymouth**	0935	1.1m	2147	1.1m
Hull	0955	7.1m	2213	6.7m	**Whitby**	0733	5.3m	2001	5.0m
Leith	0616	5.2m	1843	4.9m	**Wick**	0247	3.3m	1513	3.0m
Liverpool	0233	8.8m	1449	8.4m	**Workington**	0258	7.8m	1516	7.4m

Sun & Moon

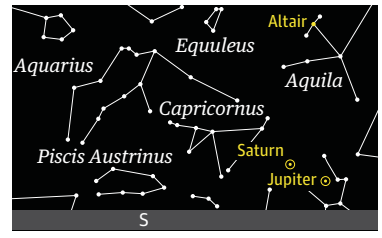
Sun rises	0623
Sun sets	1932
Moon rises	2141
Moon sets	1141
Last Quarter	10 Sept

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2020

Lighting up

Belfast	2001 to 0645
Birm'ham	1940 to 0630
Brighton	1932 to 0626
Bristol	1943 to 0635
Carlisle	1948 to 0631
Cork	2006 to 0658
Dublin	1959 to 0647
Glasgow	1955 to 0637
Harlech	1950 to 0639
Inverness	1956 to 0633
London	1932 to 0624
M'chester	1943 to 0631
Newcastle	1943 to 0627
Norwich	1928 to 0618
Penzance	1953 to 0648

Starwatch



Autumn is the best time of year to search out Capricornus, the goat, most often represented on sky maps as the mythical sea-goat, a half-goat half-fish creature. It is one of the 12 zodiacal constellations, occupying its station between Sagittarius and Aquarius. It is a faint constellation that can be tricky to locate for the first time, but at the moment, there are two bright planets to point it out. The chart shows the view looking due south from London at midnight tonight but the view will be almost identical throughout the week. Drawing a line through Jupiter and Saturn will guide you to Capricornus. From mid-Northern latitudes, the constellation never rises very high in the sky. From the southern hemisphere it appears much higher in the western sky. Capricornus may not be a spectacular sight, but it is one of the earliest constellations recognised, appearing on Ptolemy's 2nd century list of 48 constellations.
Stuart Clark *@DrStuClark*

Around the world

Algiers	28	Lisbon	32
Ams'dam	20	Madrid	27
Athens	32	Malaga	27
Auckland	15	Melb'rne	23
B Aires	14	Mexico C	23
Bangkok	35	Miami	31
Barcelona	23	Milan	23
Basra	46	Mombasa	27
Beijing	32	Moscow	23
Berlin	18	Mumbai	31
Bermuda	30	N Orleans	33
Brussels	20	Nairobi	20
Budapest	26	New Delhi	32
C'hagen	18	New York	26
Cairo	36	Oslo	16
Cape Town	21	Paris	23
Chicago	22	Perth	17
Corfu	31	Prague	19
Dakar	30	Reykjavik	10
Dhaka	33	Rio de J	27
Dublin	18	Rome	27
Florence	31	Shanghai	33
Gibraltar	25	Singapore	31
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	17
Harare	24	Strasb'g	22
Helsinki	16	Sydney	22
Istanbul	28	Tel Aviv	32
Jo'burg	23	Tenerife	28
K Lumpur	32	Tokyo	31
K'mandu	28	Toronto	23
Kabul	32	Vancouv'r	23
Kingston	31	Vienna	21
Kolkata	33	Warsaw	18
L Angeles	35	Wash'ton	30
Lagos	30	Well'ton	12
Lima	17	Zurich	20

Sport

Football

Liverpool's Williams in Wales dreamland

Page 37 →

Cycling

Yates loses yellow jersey to Roglic as Pogacar wins stage

Page 43 →

▲ *Dina Asher-Smith may be seen rarely on our screens now the BBC's deal with UK Athletics has ended*
JEWEL SAMAD/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Running on empty

End to TV deal could mean top athletes risk being unseen and underfinanced

Sean Ingle

The best of times, the worst of times. In Dina Asher-Smith, Katarina Johnson-Thompson, Jemma Reekie and Laura Muir, UK Athletics has four potential Olympic champions pounding loudly at the door. Yet its lucrative BBC TV contract worth more than £2m a year has ended, there are fears UKA may have to scrap its Diamond League meetings as a result and it is now staring at more red ink on its balance sheet than a miscreant pupil's exercise book.

Life and death. Yet between the two, a sliver of hope.

Yes, hope. True, you had to look hard for it on an unseasonably chilly weekend at the British Championships. Especially as of the 78 athletes UKA put on its Olympic world-class programme last December, barely a dozen turned up, a terrible look for a sport craving relevance and a new broadcasting deal. Yet over 1.4 million people tuned in on BBC Two – more than most sports get on satellite TV. That suggests there is a possibility of a rebirth, a chance for UKA's new chief executive, Joanna Coates, to find a way out of the mire.

It is barely four months since an independent review by UK Sport found UKA "couldn't get any worse" and demanded changes to its structures, culture and ethical approach. Privately, though, many believe UK Sport barely scratched the surface. For years athletes have felt their talents are poorly projected by their governing body and that its medical provision falls short. It is also not hard to find coaches who feel a massive central hub in Loughborough is too expensive and has not worked, and that coach education has been ignored.

You also did not have to be a soothsayer to predict that throwing money at a new event, the World Cup of Athletics, on the same weekend as the 2018 World Cup final and the finale of Wimbledon would be a disaster – especially without all shoe brands on board. And while some at UKA maintain it has a duty to attempt new ideas, this one cost it nearly £2m.

So far Coates has shown a refreshing transparency in her first six months, acknowledging not only UKA's mistakes but promising to put ethics before medals. It gives hope that the days of slipping into grey areas, of highly embarrassing moments, such as having UKA's former head doctor Rob Chakraverty being censured by parliament for failing to record the amount of L-Carnitine administered to Mo Farah in 2014, are behind them.

However identifying problems is one thing, implementing solutions quite another. Take the TV deal that UKA hopes to have in place by December. No one is going to pay more than the £2m a year the BBC have been doing since 2013, to show the British indoor and outdoor championships, the Müller Grand Prix and two Diamond League meetings, which means another financial hit is coming. And without terrestrial coverage of a London and Gateshead Diamond League, Nike and Müller will also lob less into UKA's coffers – a double disaster for the sport.

There is another fear lurking in the background: that UK Sport may have less money to dole out to UKA in future. Already Coates is having to perform a high-wire act in a force 10 gale.

Controversially, she has also chosen a willingness to gamble in picking Christian Malcolm, who has only five years' coaching experience and was only an assistant relay coach behind Stephen Maguire and Benke Blomkvist as recently as 2017, to be her new head coach. That was certainly risky: the equivalent of a craps player rubbing their hands, rolling the dice and trusting they end up with a golden arm.

Other applicants for the job – particularly Maguire, Toni Minichiello, Peter Eriksson and Harry Marra – had more weighty CVs. Malcolm's friends insist he has the leadership qualities to rise to the challenge and that he impressed UKA during his interview with his "radical" and "innovative" plans.

For UKA's plans to work it surely also needs a major terrestrial broadcaster reaching homes and minds

One idea being mooted is to assemble an Avengers-style team of retired stars to bring though more talent. Yet a fundamental question remains: high performance is about winning medals. So what is the plan to bring more juniors through successfully, revitalise the country's field events, and move UK Athletics back into the fast lane?

Elsewhere there are suggestions that Coates wants to plug everyday and grassroots athletes into the sport. Already she has talked of wanting to put "athletes first", with an aspiration of having a finalist in every Olympic event by 2032 and plans to fundamentally improve the infrastructure at every level.

The hope, apparently, is that more people will see athletics as a means to get active and then dive deeper into track and field but for that plan to work it requires a terrestrial broadcaster to reach into its wallets to keep the sport in people's homes.

Yet even in these perilous financial times, there is reason for cautious optimism. Asher-Smith and Johnson-Thompson are reigning world champions, Reekie and Muir have quietly set the quickest times in the world over 800m and 1500m this year and Amy Hunt is a fast-emerging star.

With such talent leading the vanguard of women's sport in this country, surely it would pay for the BBC or ITV to remain in track and field's slipstream?

Analysis
Bryan Armen Graham

Run of near misses comes to a dramatic end after controversial summer for a brilliant villain

A major tournament already bound to be remembered for the oddities of empty stadiums, social distancing and bubbles within bubbles took its strangest turn yet on a sweltering Sunday afternoon.

Defaulting Novak Djokovic after he accidentally struck a line judge with a ball was the correct decision under the rules, regardless of intent, and one that has rocked an already embattled tournament to its foundation,

We may be through with 2020, but 2020 ain't through with us.

The three-times champion was off the grounds within the hour, tacking on the fine for skipping the post-match news conference and opportunity to explain his actions to a $250,000 tab in prize money forfeited. A perfect 26-0 start to the season was in tatters along with his bid for an 18th major title.

Busta, the 2017 US Open semi-finalist who did face the press afterward, expressed sympathy in the aftermath. But when pressed, the 29-year-old Spaniard was unequivocal. "The rules are the rules," he said. "The referee and the supervisor do the right thing, but is not easy to do it, no?"

If there was a silver lining for the organisers, it was perhaps that the shocking final act played out in an Arthur Ashe Stadium filled with a few dozen players and officials and not 23,711 spectators who surely would have shelled out top dollar for Labor Day weekend tickets that often go for hundreds above face value. And it would have only placed further strain on the long-running antipathy between Djokovic and the New York crowds, a beef that goes back more than a decade to a time when he was fighting a reputation as a drama queen who melted down under pressure and blamed defeats on external factors.

Back in 2008, Djokovic didn't take it kindly when Andy Roddick sarcastically rattled off a laundry list of Djokovic's ailments before their third-round match, noting that anthrax, bird flu and Sars could be future complaints from the Serb. After defeating Roddick the next day amid a cacophony of boos, Djokovic incited further anger by insulting the crowd and creating an antipathy that has never quite dissipated, even after winning the tournament.

So there is little doubt the US Open averted an ugly spectacle. But what it means for Djokovic beyond his devoted fanbase is less certain.

For one, this is not the first time Djokovic's reckless behaviour on the court has been put to question. He admitted he was "lucky" to not hit a nearby line judge when his racket flew out of his hand towards the back wall on Philippe Chatrier Court of as he went to smash it in the dirt during the 2016 French Open quarter-finals.

Then a few months later at the ATP Finals in London, Djokovic snapped at a reporter who suggested he nearly hit a spectator when he struck a ball seemingly in the direction of his players' box and earned a code violation.

"You guys are unbelievable," he said. "You're always picking these kind of things. I'm the only player that shows his frustration on the court? It's not an issue for me. It's not the first time I did it. It could have been, yes. It could have snowed in the O_2 Arena as well, but it didn't."

But last night's default also comes at the end of summer where Djokovic's reputation has taken a battering, as he's spread anti-vaccine sentiments while turning over his platform to various snake oil salesman on Instagram – say nothing of his disastrous Adria Tour endeavour, which to many boiled down to coronavirus denial.

He remains to many an outsider: the third man who disrupted the beloved Federer-Nadal duopoly, existing unapologetically outside the sport's American/western European establishment. Not since Ivan Lendl has an all-time great appeared to be so unloved beyond his core fanbase.

Through ruthless dominance Djokovic has become his sport's Floyd Mayweather sans the rap sheet: a champion leagues above his rivals who rules with a technical brilliance that critics degrade as mechanical and boring. And like Mayweather, he's shown he's clearly willing to embrace the villain's role when it's thrust upon him – and has demonstrated the ability to feed off negative energy.

But episodes like last night's suggest it may not be simply a role he's playing. Not only does the Serb's departure ensure a first-time grand slam champion in the men's tournament at Flushing Meadows, it will mark the first major tournament without Djokovic, Federer or Nadal in the last four since the 2004 French Open. All it took was a global pandemic and freak denouement.

◀ *Novak Djokovic, who has come close to hitting officials with balls in the past, realises his luck is out*
JASON SZENES/EPA

Djokovic out
'If it had landed anywhere else he'd be fine'

Continued *from back page*

major." The sequence of events blew the silence on Arthur Ashe Stadium apart. Djokovic, who had looked in control for the first 40 minutes, failed to convert three set points at 5-4, then lost six points in a row, fell while chasing down a wide forehand and jarred his shoulder at five-all, 0-15.

The match resumed after he received on-court medical treatment but Djokovic still looked out of sorts and Busta broke him to 15. Frustration seemed to well up in the Serb, down 5-6, and, swivelling slowly, he took a spare ball from his pocket, hitting it with no great force, it seemed, but it struck the official in the throat.

She fell to the ground, choking and in obvious distress. Djokovic rushed to her side and apologised as court officials, including the chair umpire, Aurélie Tourte, came to her aid.

As Carreño Busta sat on his chair, bemused, Djokovic and Soeren Friemel, the tournament referee, chatted amiably at first before the player became more agitated as he realised he was about to be thrown out.

One unconfirmed report said Djokovic pleaded with the official: "She doesn't have to go to hospital for this," adding, "You're going to choose a default in this situation? My career, grand slam, centre stage."

Carreño Busta said he felt some sympathy for Djokovic, although he did not see the incident, as he was celebrating the break. "I was a little bit in shock," he said. "I never expected this moment playing against Novak. Of course I think it was not intentional. It was just a moment. I broke his serve and he throws the ball. I think it was bad luck. He never wanted to hit the line umpire. The rules are the rules. The referee and the supervisor did the right thing but it is not easy."

Alexander Zverev, who won through to the quarter-finals by beating Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-2, 6-2, 6-1, looked at it very much from the point of view of a title contender when he said: "If it had landed anywhere else – we're talking about a few inches – he would have been fin e. Very unlucky. There's no grand slam champions left in the draw. It's going to be one of the young guys, I think."

Djokovic has been involved in similar incidents at least twice, at Roland Garros in 2016 and later that year at the ATP World Tour Finals, when he hit balls into the crowd.

"You guys are unbelievable," he told the British media then when questioned in London. "You're always picking these kind of things. I'm still not suspended, so I'm not close [to hitting a spectator]. It could have been [serious], yes. It could have snowed but it didn't."

A bigger storm is gathering around Djokovic now, however. Criticism came from all quarters. Martina Navratilova said: "Unbelievable what just happened. Novak Djokovic defaulted for inadvertently but stupidly hitting a linseswoman in the throat with a ball and the officials had no choice but to default."

> ***'I was a little bit in shock. He never wanted to hit the line umpire'***
>
> **Pablo Carreño Busta**
> *Novak Djokovic's opponent*

Billie Jean King said on Twitter: "First, I hope the line judge is OK. The rule is the rule. It is unfortunate for everyone but in this specific situation the default was the right call."

The fine, disqualification and opprobrium were inevitable. The grand slam rules of conduct state: "Players shall not at any time physically abuse any official, opponent, spectator or other person within the tournament site. Violation of this section shall subject a player to a fine up to $20,000 for each violation.

"In addition, if such violation occurs during a match (including the warmup), the player shall be penalised in accordance with the point penalty schedule. In circumstances that are flagrant and particularly injurious to the success of a tournament, a single violation of this section shall also constitute the major offence of 'aggravated behaviour' and shall be subject to the additional penalties hereinafter set forth."

Racing

Bushell's regime 'targeted small Jockey Club tracks'

Chris Cook

Consultants brought into the Jockey Club by Delia Bushell questioned why it bothered with owning small racecourses instead of focusing on Cheltenham, which generates huge profits.

The news that such thoughts were being aired within the venerable organisation will be shocking to many racing insiders, who have long taken it for granted that the Jockey Club is a good and careful custodian of its venues, but it reflects the "nothing is sacred" mood that prevailed under Bushell, who quit as chief executive last week after a year in the role.

"They were talking about why we invested anything in small racecourses," one insider recalled of the early days of Bushell's tenure. "'Why not spend all your investment at Cheltenham, that's where you make most money?'"

The source said that showed Bushell's consultants had not grasped the Jockey Club's mission, defined by royal charter as being to act for "the long-term good of British racing". "But these guys were spreadsheet junkies. 'The small racecourses don't make any money,' they'd say. 'Why do you own them?' It was just an idea that was being kicked around. But it showed they didn't have any kind of feel for the place."

The Jockey Club has a varied portfolio of 15 tracks, including some of the most important like Epsom and Newmarket as well as more grassroots circuits such as Carlisle, Market Rasen and Nottingham. Orthodox thinking has long held that the lower-profile racecourses are needed to provide experience for horses and opportunities for trainers and jockeys, helping ensure that levels of competition are high for the biggest days at Cheltenham and elsewhere.

▲ *Delia Bushell left her role as Jockey Club chief executive last week*

Bushell's lawyers wrote a letter to the Jockey Club on Saturday mentioning "the likelihood of imminent litigation", according to a report in the Sunday Times, claiming she had been brought down by a "cabal of male co-conspirators". It contained detailed denials of the allegations against her made in the course of a recent investigation, particularly an allegation of racist comments, said to have "appalled" her and to have been a misrepresentation of what she had said.

The Jockey Club issued a robust statement yesterday, saying it "completely refutes the many false and unsubstantiated claims made against it, some of its members and its staff by Delia Bushell. Her departure was based entirely on the evidence from a full, fair and independent investigation into a number of serious allegations that were raised about her unacceptable behaviours. The Jockey Club intends to vigorously contest any proceedings she may bring."

Cricket *Bob Willis Trophy*

Abell soothes Somerset but Essex stumble

Tanya Aldred
Aigburth

Jeopardy leaned over the final Bob Willis Trophy group games of the summer, with only the two group winners with the most points going through to the final at Lord's.

In a top of the Central table clash at New Road, **Somerset**'s captain, Tom Abell, ushered his fragile top order to 120 for two before falling for 59 as Somerset lost four for 14. The usual big-hitting by the bowlers bolstered the total enough to collect two batting points. **Worcestershire**'s Ed Barnard and Dillon Pennington picked up three wickets each.

Fifteen wickets fell at Chelmsford where the South Group leaders, **Essex**, bowled out **Middlesex** cheaply then stumbled to 108 for five. Middlesex withered in the face of accurate bowling from Sam Cook (four for 27), Jamie Porter (three for 55) and Simon Harmer (three for 34); but Alastair Cook's dismissal precipitated the loss of four Essex wickets for a song – the hunt for batting points continues today.

Lancashire's Josh Bohannon flung his bat in the way of **Derbyshire**'s hopes for Lord's. He held together an inexperienced side until becoming marooned in the 90s and eventually clipping to midwicket. A late clatter of wickets left Derbyshire, top of the North group, in the hunt.

Ian Bell, the last of England's 2005 Ashes team still playing and who has announced his retirement, scored 50 in his penultimate first-class match for **Warwickshire**, that cover drive as dreamy as ever, but Glamorgan dismissed his side for 186.

Jamie Overton went wicketless on the first day of his **Surrey** debut, though he did worry **Sussex** with a hostile spell. Tom Haines finished unbeaten on 105. Sussex were without Mitch Claydon, suspended on suspicion of illegally using hand sanitiser on the ball in August.

A century partnership between Gareth Harte and Stuart Poynter bolstered **Durham** against **Nottinghamshire** at Trent Bridge, while **Yorkshire**, in with a chance of overtaking Derbyshire in the North, bowled out **Leicestershire** for 124, Ben Coad taking five for 18, before being thwarted by the rain.

Results and cricket scoreboard

Cricket

BOB WILLIS TROPHY (first day of four)
Central Group

Glamorgan v Warwickshire

Swalec Stadium Glamorgan (3pts) trail Warwickshire (0) by 182 runs with nine first-innings wickets remaining.
Warwickshire First innings
RM Yates c Cullen b Carey 11
***WMH Rhodes** b Van der Gugten 2
SR Hain lbw b Van der Gugten 4
IR Bell c Cullen b Douthwaite 50
DR Mousley lbw b Carey 31
†MGK Burgess c Selman b Carey 13
A Thomson c Cullen b Van der Gugten 6
EA Brookes c Selman b Douthwaite 6
LC Norwell c Carey b Douthwaite 12
OJ Hannon-Dalby c Cullen b Hogan 19
RN Sidebottom not out 13
Extras (b5, lb12, nb2) 19
Total (66.3 overs) 186
Fall 3, 17, 23, 93, 117, 132, 138, 138, 154.
Bowling Van der Gugten 19-8-45-3; Carey 19-4-54-3; Hogan 14.3-7-27-1; Douthwaite 13-1-42-3; Taylor 1-0-1-0.
Glamorgan First innings
NJ Selman c Bell b Norwell 2
JM Cooke not out 2
T van der Gugten not out 0
Extras 0
Total (for 1, 8 overs) 4
Fall 3.
To bat AO Morgan, WT Root, *CB Cooke, CZ Taylor, DA Douthwaite, †TN Cullen, LJ Carey, MG Hogan.
Bowling Hannon-Dalby 4-2-3-0; Norwell 4-3-1-1.
Toss Glamorgan elected to field.
Umpires JH Evans and RA White.

Gloucestershire v Northamptonshire

Bristol Match abandoned due to Covid-19. Northamptonshire (10pts). Gloucestershire (8).
Gloucestershire First innings
JR Bracey c Gouldstone b Muzarabani 4
B Charlesworth c Vasconcelos b Hutton 1
GL van Buuren c Gay b White 22
TC Lace c Gay b Procter 2
GT Hankins b White 6
RF Higgins not out 13
GFB Scott c Vasconcelos b Kerrigan 11
Extras (b1, lb4, nb2) 7
Total (for 6, 29.4 overs) 66
Fall 7, 17, 34, 34, 46, 66.
To bat TMJ Smith, DA Payne, MD Taylor, J Shaw.
Bowling Hutton 9-2-22-1; Muzarabani 5-3-5-1; White 8-3-18-2; Procter 6-1-15-1; Kerrigan 1.4-0-1-1.
Northamptonshire EN Gay, *RS Vasconcelos, CO Thurston, LA Procter, RI Keogh, SA Zaib, †HOM Gouldstone, BA Hutton, SC Kerrigan, B Muzarabani, CJ White.
Toss Northamptonshire elected to field.
Umpires JW Lloyds and ID Blackwell.

Worcestershire v Somerset

New Road Worcestershire (3pts) trail Somerset (2) by 237 runs with 10 first-inning wickets remaining.
Somerset First innings
BGF Green run out (Barnard) 8
TA Lammonby b Pennington 28
***TB Abell** c Cox b Pennington 59
GA Bartlett b Tongue 18
EJ Byrom c Barnard b Pennington 30
†SM Davies b D'Oliveira 9
C Overton c Mitchell b Barnard 1
L Gregory c Pennington b D'Oliveira 37
JH Davey c sub b Barnard 28
MJ Leach lbw b Barnard 21
JA Brooks not out 4
Extras (b5, lb3) 8
Total (83.1 overs) 251
Fall 18, 93, 120, 120, 131, 134, 195, 203, 242.
Bowling Leach 20-4-59-0; Tongue 12-3-40-1; Pennington 20-5-49-3; Barnard 15.1-3-53-3; D'Oliveira 15-3-31-2; Mitchell 1-0-11-0.
Worcestershire First innings
DKH Mitchell not out 8
JD Libby not out 2
Extras (lb4) 4
Total (for 0, 5 overs) 14
To bat TC Fell, JA Haynes, BL D'Oliveira, MH Wessels, †OB Cox, E Barnard, *J Leach, JC Tongue, D Pennington.
Bowling Overton 3-0-8-0; Davey 2-0-2-0.
Toss Somerset elected to bat.
Umpires NA Mallender and RJ Bailey.

North Group

Lancashire v Derbyshire

Liverpool Lancashire (1pts) lead Derbyshire (2) by 206 runs with two first-innings wickets remaining.
Lancashire First innings
KK Jennings lbw b Conners 0
†AL Davies lbw b Reece 0
JJ Bohannon c Hudson-Prentice b Melton 94
RP Jones c Du Plooy b Melton 23
***DJ Vilas** c Hosein b Reece 5
GID Lavelle lbw b Melton 13
GP Balderson c Madsen b Conners 36
DJ Lamb c Du Plooy b Critchley 8
TW Hartley not out 5
J Morley not out 0
Extras (b8, lb10, nb4) 22
Total (for 8, 90 overs) 206
Fall 0, 2, 58, 72, 108, 169, 197, 197.
To bat GD Burrows.
Bowling Conners 12-5-25-2; Reece 24-9-49-2; Melton 17-4-46-3; Hudson-Prentice 8-2-22-0; Critchley 22-8-39-1; Dal 7-4-7-0.
Derbyshire *BA Godleman, LM Reece, WL Madsen, JL du Plooy, MJJ Critchley, HR Hosein, FJ Hudson-Prentice, AK Dal, S Conners, MH McKiernan, DR Melton.
Toss Lancashire elected to bat.
Umpires GD Lloyd and SJ O'Shaughnessy.

Nottinghamshire v Durham

Trent Bridge Durham (2pts) lead Nottinghamshire (2) by 275 runs with two first-innings wickets remaining.
Durham First innings
AZ Lees c Moores b Ball 31
SR Dickson lbw b Chappell 7
MA Jones c Carter b Chappell 0
DG Bedingham c Duckett b Chappell 4
GJ Harte b Mullaney 72
SW Poynter c Moores b Carter 50
***†EJH Eckersley** c Ball b Carter 25
P Coughlin c Hameed b Carter 21
BA Carse not out 35
BA Raine not out 23
Extras (b1, lb2, nb4) 7
Total (for 8, 95 overs) 275
Fall 16, 29, 33, 66, 167, 180, 204, 227.
To bat C Rushworth.
Bowling Ball 16-4-56-1; Chappell 19-3-75-3; Trego 11-4-37-0; Carter 26-10-43-3; Patel 14-2-34-0; Mullaney 9-1-27-1.
Nottinghamshire BT Slater, H Hameed, BM Duckett, JM Clarke, *SJ Mullaney, SR Patel, †TJ Moores, PD Trego, M Carter, ZJ Chappell, JT Ball.
Toss Durham elected to bat.
Umpires IN Ramage and NGB Cook.

Yorkshire v Leicestershire

Headingley Yorkshire (3pts) trail Leicestershire (0) by 88 runs with eight first-innings wickets remaining.
Leicestershire First innings
Hassan Azad lbw b Fisher 0
ST Evans lbw b Coad 7
HE Dearden c & b Olivier 20
***CN Ackermann** lbw b Fisher 1
RK Patel c Lyth b Coad 19
†HJ Swindells c Tattersall b Coad 36
AM Lilley lbw b Coad 5
BWM Mike c Brook b Fisher 17
D Klein c Brook b Olivier 5
GT Griffiths not out 4
HA Evans c Lyth b Coad 0
Extras (b2, lb6, nb2) 10
Total (48.2 overs) 124
Fall 7, 11, 12, 36, 59, 65, 98, 115, 124.
Bowling Coad 13.2-6-18-5; Fisher 12-4-29-3; Thompson 12-5-20-0; Olivier 11-0-49-2.
Yorkshire First innings
***A Lyth** c Swindells b Klein 4
T Kohler-Cadmore c ST Evans b HA Evans 0
WAR Fraine not out 11
TW Loten not out 7
Extras (lb5, w5, nb4) 14
Total (for 2, 12.1 overs) 36
Fall 4, 4. **To bat** HC Brook, †JA Tattersall, JA Thompson, MD Fisher, BO Coad, D Olivier, JW Shutt.
Bowling Klein 6.1-1-17-1; HA Evans 5-2-13-1; Griffiths 1-0-1-0. **Toss** Yorkshire elected to field.
Umpires PJ Hartley and JD Middlebrook.

South Group

Essex v Middlesex

Chelmsford Essex (3pts) trail Middlesex (0) by 30 runs with five first-innings wickets remaining.
Middlesex First innings
SD Robson b Porter 15
MDE Holden c Wheater b SJ Cook 0
NRT Gubbins lbw b Porter 2
***SS Eskinazi** c Wheater b SJ Cook 15
RG White c AN Cook b Porter 12
MK Andersson c Khushi b Harmer 5
†JA Simpson c Wheater b Harmer 12
JAR Harris lbw b SJ Cook 34
BC Cullen c Wheater b Harmer 11
TN Walallawita c Wheater b SJ Cook 4
TJ Murtagh not out 11
Extras (lb13, nb4) 17
Total (53.3 overs) 138
Fall 2, 5, 18, 38, 50, 56, 76, 110, 120.
Bowling Porter 15-3-55-3; SJ Cook 15-5-27-4; Beard 5-2-9-0; Harmer 18.3-5-34-3.
Essex First innings
PI Walter b Harris 43
AN Cook c Eskinazi b Cullen 6
***T Westley** b Murtagh 8
DW Lawrence c Simpson b Murtagh 0
FIN Khushi lbw b Harris 1
RN ten Doeschate not out 28
†AJA Wheater not out 18
Extras (lb2, nb2) 4
Total (for 5, 37 overs) 108
Fall 18, 35, 43, 44, 87.
To bat SR Harmer, AP Beard, SJ Cook, JA Porter.
Bowling Murtagh 12-4-27-2; Cullen 9-1-27-1; Walallawita 7-3-7-0; Harris 9-1-45-2.
Toss Essex elected to bat. **Umpires** PR Pollard and RJ Warren.

Kent v Hampshire

Canterbury Kent (3pts) trail Hampshire (0) by 170 runs with eight first-innings wickets remaining.
Hampshire First innings
JJ Weatherley lbw b Podmore 37
IG Holland c Kuhn b Milnes 42
TP Alsop c Kuhn b Stevens 8
***SA Northeast** c Robinson b Stevens 16
FS Organ lbw b Stevens 0
†LD McManus c Robinson b Stevens 17
T Scriven c Robinson b Milnes 8
SW Currie c Robinson b Podmore 38
MS Crane c Robinson b Milnes 0
BTJ Wheal not out 14
AS Dale c Robinson b Stevens 0
Extras (lb7, nb4) 11
Total (75 overs) 191
Fall 69, 85, 99, 99, 126, 126, 127, 144, 190.
Bowling Podmore 21-6-49-2; Stevens 27-15-37-5; Milnes 15-5-54-3; Stewart 12-2-44-0.
Kent First innings
***DJ Bell-Drummond** b Holland 16
JM Cox c Alsop b Currie 2
ME Milnes not out 1
Z Crawley not out 0
Extras (nb2) 2
Total (for 2, 13 overs) 21
Fall 20, 20.
To bat JA Leaning, HG Kuhn, †OG Robinson, MK O'Riordan, DI Stevens, G Stewart, HW Podmore. **Bowling** Wheal 5-1-11-0; Holland 6-5-4-1; Currie 2-0-6-1.
Toss Kent elected to field. **Umpires** BV Taylor and NJ Long.

Surrey v Sussex

The Oval Sussex (1pts) lead Surrey (1) by 239 runs with seven first-innings wickets remaining.
Sussex First innings
AD Thomason lbw b Moriarty 49
TJ Haines not out 105
HZ Finch lbw b Virdi 1
DMW Rawlins c Jacks b Virdi 65
***†BC Brown** not out 9
Extras (lb2, nb8) 10
Total (for 3, 77 overs) 239
Fall 102, 109, 225.
To bat J Coles, D Wiese, GHS Garton, SC Meaker, JJ Carson, HT Crocombe.
Bowling Overton 9-1-35-0; Finch 14-0-43-0; Taylor 2-0-16-0; Virdi 24-7-50-2; Moriarty 24-3-69-1; Borthwick 4-0-24-0.
Surrey *RJ Burns, SG Borthwick, HM Amla, JL Smith, †BT Foakes, WG Jacks, J Overton, AW Finch, JPA Taylor, DT Moriarty, GS Virdi.
Toss Sussex elected to bat.
Umpires BJ Debenham and NL Bainton.

Rugby union

GALLAGHER PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	B	Pts
Exeter	18	14	0	4	554	313	12	68
Sale	18	11	0	7	466	287	11	55
Bristol	18	11	1	6	403	378	7	53
Wasps	18	10	0	8	471	427	11	51
Bath	18	11	0	7	395	383	6	50
Northampton	18	8	0	10	390	418	9	41
Gloucester	18	7	0	11	438	419	13	41
Harlequins	18	7	1	10	396	472	7	37
London Irish	18	5	1	12	317	500	7	29
Worcester	18	5	0	13	283	486	7	27
Leicester	18	5	1	12	310	459	2	24
Saracens **R**	18	12	0	6	482	363	10	-47

Gloucester 36 London Irish 23; Harlequins 27 Bath 41; Leicester 31 Sale 40; Saracens 18 Wasps 28

GUINNESS PRO14
Semi-finals Edinburgh 19 Ulster 22; Leinster 12 Munster 3

Tennis

US OPEN (Flushing Meadows)
Men: Third round: D THIEM (Aut, 2) bt M CILIC (Cro, 31) 6-2 6-2 3-6 6-3
Fourth round: A ZVEREV (Ger, 5) bt A Davidovich Fokina (Sp) 6-2 6-2 6-1; **P CARREÑO BUSTA** (Sp, 20) bt N DJOKOVIC (Ser, 1) 6-5 defaulted
Doubles: Quarter-finals: R RAM & J SALISBURY (US/GB, 3) bt C Eubanks & M McDonald (US) 6-2 7-5 (5)
Women: Third round: A Cornet (Fr) bt M KEYS (US, 7) 7-6 (4) 3-2 ret; **S KENIN** (US, 2) bt O JABEUR (Tun, 27) 7-6 (4) 6-3
Fourth round: J BRADY (US, 28) bt A KERBER (Ger, 17) 6-1 6-4; **Y PUTINSEVA** (Rus, 23) bt P MARTIC (Cro, 8) 6-3 2-6 6-4

Golf

ANDALUCIA MASTERS (Valderrama)
Leading final scores (GB/Ire unless stated)
286 J Catlin (US) 69 70 72 75. **287** M Kaymer (Ger) 72 72 69 74. **288** W Besseling (Neth) 75 72 69 72; J Harding (SA) 71 75 71 71; A Rozner (Fr) 76 69 73 70. **289** G Migliozzi (It) 69 74 74 72; W Nienaber (SA) 72 70 76 71. **291** C Syme 69 72 76 74; M Kawamura (Jpn) 73 73 74 71. **292** S Brown 73 74 74 71; J Donaldson 72 69 73 78; D Horsey 74 73 72 73; S Valimaki (Fin) 77 69 69 77; J Veerman (US) 73 73 72 74; L Gagli (It) 74 69 71 78; L Westwood 76 73 76 67. **293** JB Hansen (Den) 74 74 74 71; M Kieffer (Ger) 73 74 76 70; J Campillo (Sp) 69 78 72 74; A Otaegui (Sp) 77 71 68 77; R Langasque (Fr) 77 73 69 74; A Quiros (Sp) 72 73 74 74; R Sciot-Siegrist (Fr) 76 73 75 69. **294** J Gonnet (Fr) 75 75 72 72; J Lagergren (Swe) 77 72 70 75; D Coupland 72 76 71 75; R Macintyre 80 69 75 70; M Southgate 76 73 70 75; P Larrazabal (Sp) 71 70 78 75; E Ferguson 73 76 73 72. **295** C Howie 75 75 71 74; D Perrier (Fr) 76 70 78 71; Wu A (Chn) 77 71 72 75; J Winther (Den) 77 68 76 74; V Perez (Fr) 76 74 76 69; W Ormsby (Aus) 74 76 75 70; B Wiesberger (Aut) 75 71 73 76; T Detry (Bel) 73 72 74 76; R Hojgaard (Den) 71 79 75 70; M Schneider (Ger) 76 74 73 72. **296** S Kjeldsen (Den) 71 72 74 79; A Canizares (Sp) 73 70 79 74; J Guerrier (Fr) 74 74 75 73; P Oriol (Sp) 75 72 71 78; C Pigem (Sp) 75 73 74 74; G Havret (Fr) 75 73 74 74; A Levy (Fr) 75 75 75 71. **297** R Wattel (Fr) 74 74 71 78; T Tree 72 77 75 73; T Olesen (Den) 72 77 76 72; P Angles (Sp) 70 77 76 74. **298** M Jordan 81 69 75 73; J Luiten (Neth) 79 69 75 75; P Waring 73 77 77 71; G Fernandez-Castano (Sp) 75 71 79 73; R McGowan 72 72 75 79. **299** B Stow 74 73 71 81; T Bjorn (Den) 72 76 74 77; A Bjork (Swe) 74 73 75 77; J McLeod (Aus) 71 73 78 77; A Garcia-Heredia (Sp) 75 74 74 76. **300** R Bland 78 72 70 80; R Roussel (Fra) 75 71 76 78; B Easton (SA) 76 73 76 75; J Caldwell 73 75 75 77. **301** S Garcia Rodriguez (Sp) 76 71 75 79; G Forrest 78 72 76 75. **302** R Santos (Por) 78 70 73 81; N Elvira (Sp) 77 70 75 80; F Laporta (It) 76 73 77 76. **303** A Saddier (Fr) 73 77 76 77; B Evans 75 73 78 77; M Schmitt (Ger) 71 75 76 81. **304** R Karlberg (Swe) 76 74 78 76

Chris Cook's racing tips

Lingfield 1.00 Ashazuri **1.30** Volcano Bay (nb) **2.00** Brenner Pass **2.30** King Zain **3.00** Al Mansoura **3.30** Lily Beach **4.00** Glencora **4.35** Disey's Edge
Leicester 1.15 Sea Fox **1.50** Baltic Prince **2.20** Famille Rose **2.50** Tawleed **3.20** Sansevero **3.50** The Golden Unicorn **4.25** Tis Marvellous **4.55** Prince Alex
Perth 2.10 Getaround **2.40** Calle Malva **3.10** The Distant Lady **3.40** Oleg (nap) **4.15** Raymond **4.50** Craigmor **5.20** Big Jim Dwyer
Windsor 3.25 Lethal Angel **3.55** Giacommo **4.30** Spoof **5.00** Impulsive One **5.30** Dhabyah **6.00** Grinling **6.30** Thunder Flash **7.00** Costello

Harder's cameo role fails to be a winner for Chelsea

Manchester United 1
Galton 79

Chelsea 1
Kerr 25

Paul Wilson

▼ *Leah Galton scores Manchester United's 79th-minute equaliser*
MARTIN RICKETT/PA

Chelsea were held at Manchester United in their opening game of the Women's Super League season, a late equaliser by Leah Galton rather spoiling Pernille Harder's debut for the defending champions. The costliest signing in women's football at £250,000 was waiting to come on when United scored, though did enough in the 10 minutes she was allowed to suggest she might have been usefully deployed somewhat earlier.

"Clearly we are not at our best yet. We lacked a bit of aggression," Emma Hayes, the Chelsea manager, said. "I mentioned beforehand I'd take a draw. We knew United would be well organised and hard to break down."

The game had been evenly contested before Chelsea broke the deadlock midway through the first half. Shots from Jane Ross and Sam Kerr that went narrowly wide at either end had been the only semblance of goalmouth action until Chelsea's Ji So-yun and Maren Mjelde launched an attack down the right. Suddenly Fran Kirby was running into space on an unprotected United flank and her inviting low cross was confidently stuck away by Kerr on the six-yard line.

Scoring would have been a relief for the normally reliable Australia striker after her hesitant performance in the Community Shield against Manchester City, while just playing was a breakthrough for Kirby, out of the game because of pericarditis for almost a year, during which she was told she might never play again.

Kerr had the ball in the net again a minute later, this time losing her marker once more to meet an excellent Guro Reiten cross from the left, only to be brought back by an offside flag.

Ross ran about with purpose, pressing high up the pitch and occasionally hurrying Chelsea defenders into mistakes, though the striker would have preferred a snappier service.

When United did create a clear chance right at the end of the first half, after Kirsty Hanson crossed from the right and a looping header from Galton came down on Carly Telford's bar, there was no real power in the effort and the goalkeeper had it covered.

Chelsea could have gone further ahead at the start of the second half when Kerr met Mjelde's cross at the near post but put the ball over the bar.

United began to assert themselves, partly because of the left-back Ona Batlle becoming more involved. Though notionally a defender she proved effective going forward, both in her ability to go past opponents and to pick out teammates in promising positions. Making her United debut, she beat Mjelde with ease on one occasion but ended up shooting wide, then she set up Ella Toone for a shot Telford did well to keep out with a one-hand save.

Chelsea made a couple of substitutions early in the second half but left their world-record signing on the bench until 10 minutes from time. By then Chelsea might have made the game safe but for two notable saves from Mary Earps to deny Erin Cuthbert, the last a point-blank stop. As it was, Harder came on with the scores level, United having stirred themselves to equalise through an incisive move down the right. In what was virtually a carbon copy of Chelsea's goal Toone set Jackie Groenen free down the right, for a cross that was neatly tucked away by Galton.

Chelsea attacked with renewed determination to try to retrieve the situation and succeeded in creating one or two half-chances. Unfortunately none fell to Harder, though the Denmark forward did show her pedigree with powerful late surges to set up stoppage-time opportunities Cuthbert and Kirby could not quite accept.

A draw was fair enough. While Chelsea always seemed to have more goals in them, a gutsy United performance was worth a point.

Manchester United
4-4-2
Earps; Smith, McManus, M Turner, Batlle (Okvist 75); Hanson (Groenen 52), Ladd, Zelem, Galton; Toone, Ross (James 60)
Subs not used
Ramsey, A.Turner

Chelsea
4-1-3-2
Telford; Mjelde, Bright, Eriksson, Andersson (Carter 80); Ingle; Reiten (Harder 80), Ji (Cuthbert 57), Leupolz; Kerr (England 66), Kirby
Subs not used
Blundell, Fleming, Charles, Spence, Orman

Referee Rebecca Welch

Roord inspires Arsenal

Jill Roord scored a hat-trick as Arsenal thrashed Reading 6-1. After Kym Little had opened the scoring and Vivianne Miedema's first of two, the Dutch midfielder's three neat finishes formed part of a hefty statement of intent. Everton also began their WSL season with a bang by winning 4-0 at Bristol City. After Simone Magill made it 1-0, Lucy Graham scored twice before Valerie Gauvin netted in the last minute to complete the rout. Megan Connolly and Inessa Kaagman scored Brighton's goals as Birmingham were beaten 2-0. The derby between Tottenham and West Ham played at the Hive ended in a 1-1 draw after Adriana Leon's goal for the Hammers cancelled out an own goal from Grace Fisk. John Brewin

The week ahead

Today

Football
(7.45pm unless stated)
Uefa Nations League
A1 Bosnia-Herzegovina v Poland; Netherlands v Italy
B1 Austria v Romania; Northern Ireland v Norway
B2 Czech Republic v Scotland; Israel v Slovakia
C4 Albania v Lithuania; Kazakhstan v Belarus (3pm) *All Sky Sports*
Cricket
(10.30am unless stated)
Bob Willis Trophy
(second day of four)
Central Group Glamorgan v Warwickshire, Swalec Stadium; Gloucestershire v Northamptonshire, Bristol; Worcestershire v Somerset, New Road
North Group Lancashire v Derbyshire, Aigburth; Nottinghamshire v Durham, Trent Bridge; Yorkshire v Leicestershire, Headingley
South Group Essex v Middlesex, Chelmsford; Kent v Hampshire, Canterbury; Surrey v Sussex, the Oval
Golf
Tour Championship
Atlanta *Sky Sports Golf*
Tennis
US Open
Flushing Meadows, New York (to Sun) *Amazon Prime*
Cycling
Tour de France (to 20 Sep) *ITV4, Eurosport 1*
Racing
Leicester, Lingfield, Perth, Windsor

Tomorrow

Football
(7.45pm unless stated)
Uefa Nations League
A2 Belgium v Iceland; Denmark v England
A3 France v Croatia; Sweden v Portugal
C1 Cyprus v Azerbaijan; Luxembourg v Montenegro
C2 Armenia v Estonia (5pm); Georgia v North Macedonia (5pm)
D2 San Marino v Liechtenstein *All Sky Sports*
Uefa European U21 Championship Qualifying
Group Three Albania v Andorra (6pm); Austria v England (7.30pm)
Group Four Lithuania v Scotland (4.30pm)
Group Eight Finland v Ukraine (5pm); Malta v Romania (5pm); Northern Ireland v Denmark (5pm)
Leasing.com Trophy
Group stage Sunderland v Aston Villa U21; Morecambe v Rochdale; Salford City v Man Utd U21; Bolton v Crewe (7pm); Shrewsbury v Newcastle U21; Port Vale v Tranmere (7pm); Lincoln City v Scunthorpe (7pm); Mansfield v Man City U21 (6pm); Doncaster v Bradford (7.30pm); Oldham v Wolves U21; Accrington Stanley v Leeds U21 (7pm); Blackpool v Barrow (7pm); Grimsby v Harrogate; Hull v Leicester U21 (5.30pm); Portsmouth v Colchester (7pm); Southend v West Ham U21 (5.30pm); Gillingham v Crawley; Ipswich v Arsenal U21; MK Dons v Northampton (7pm); Stevenage v Southampton U21; Bristol Rovers v Walsall; Oxford Utd v Chelsea U21; Exeter v Forest Green (5.30pm); Swindon v West Brom U21; Newport County v Cheltenham (7pm); Plymouth v Norwich U21; Leyton Orient v Brighton U21; Cambridge Utd v Fulham U21; Peterborough v Burton Albion
Rugby union
Gallagher Premiership
Bristol v Northampton (7.45pm)
Cricket
Third T20 International
England v Australia, Rose Bowl (6pm) *Sky Sports Cricket*
Tennis
ATP Generali Open
Kitzbühel (to Sun)
Racing
Catterick, Goodwood, Newcastle, Newton Abbot

Wednesday

Rugby union
Gallagher Premiership
Bath v Worcester (7.45pm); Exeter v Gloucester (5.30pm); London Irish v Harlequins (7.45pm); Sale v Saracens (6pm); Wasps v Leicester (5.30pm)
Racing
Doncaster, Kempton, Uttoxeter. Wolverhampton

Thursday

Rugby league
Betfred Super League
Hull v Wakefield (6pm) *Sky Sports Arena*; Castleford v Warrington (8.15pm) *Sky Sports Arena*
Cricket
Vitality T20 Blast
South Group Hampshire v Sussex, Rose Bowl (6.35pm) *Sky Sports Cricket*
Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy
North Thunder v Diamonds, Aigburth (10.30am)
Golf
ANA Inspiration
Palm Springs, California (to Sun) *Sky sports Golf*
Portugal Masters
Vilamoura (to Sun) *SSG*
Safeway Opem
Scottsdale (to Sun) *SSG*
Racing
Chelmsford, Chepstow, Doncaster, Haydock

Friday

Football
Sky Bet Championship
Watford v Middlesbrough (7.45pm) *SSF*
Rugby league
Betfred Super League
Leeds v Huddersfield (8.15pm) *Sky Sports Arena*; St Helens v Hull KR (6pm) *Sky Sports Arena*
Cricket
(6.30pm unless stated)
First ODI
England v Australia, Old Trafford (1pm) *SSC*
Vitality T20 Blast
Central Group Warwickshire v Glamorgan, Edgbaston; Northamptonshire v Gloucestershire, Northampton (2.30pm); Somerset v Worcestershire, Taunton. **North Group** Durham v Derbyshire, Riverside; Leicestershire v Yorkshire, Grace Road; Nottinghamshire v Lancashire, Trent Bridge
South Group Essex v Surrey, Chelmsford (2pm)
Athletics
Diamond League
Zürich
Racing
Chester, Doncaster, Salisbury, Sandown

Saturday

Football (3pm unless stated)
Premier League
Crystal Palace v Southampton; Fulham v Arsenal (12.30pm) *BTS1*; Liverpool v Leeds (5.30pm) *Sky Sports Premier League*; West Ham v Newcastle
Sky Bet Championship
Bournemouth v Blackburn; Barnsley v Luton; Birmingham v Brentford (12.30pm) *Sky Sports Football*; Bristol City v Coventry; Cardiff v Sheff Wed; Derby v Reading; Huddersfield v Norwich; Millwall v Stoke; Preston v Swansea; QPR v Nottm Forest; Wycombe v Rotherham (12.30pm)
Sky Bet League One
Accrington v Peterborough; Crewe v Charlton; Doncaster v MK Dons; Fleetwood v Burton Albion; Gillingham v Hull; Lincoln City v Oxford Utd; Northampton v AFC Wimbledon; Plymouth v Blackpool; Portsmouth v Shrewsbury; Sunderland v Bristol Rovers; Swindon v Rochdale
Sky Bet League Two
Barrow v Stevenage; Bolton v Forest Green; Bradford v Colchester; Cambridge Utd v Carlisle; Cheltenham v Morecambe; Mansfield v Tranmere; Oldham v Leyton Orient; Port Vale v Crawley; Salford City v Exeter; Scunthorpe v Newport; Southend v Harrogate; Walsall v Grimsby
Scottish Premiership
Aberdeen v Kilmarnock; Livingston v Hamilton; Motherwell v St Johnstone; Rangers v Dundee Utd; Ross County v Celtic; St Mirren v Hibernian
FA Women's Super League
West Ham v Arsenal (5.20pm) *BT Sport 1*
FA Women's C'ship
Crystal Palace v London City (7pm)
Rugby league
Betfred Super League
Catalans Dragons v Wigan (5pm) *Sky Sports Arena*
Cricket (2pm unless stated)
Vitality T20 Blast
South Group Middlesex v Hampshire, Lord's; Kent v Sussex, Canterbury
Racing
Chester, Doncaster, Fontwell, Lingfield, Musselburgh

Sunday

Football (2pm unless stated)
Premier League
Tottenham v Everton (4.30pm) *Sky Sports Premier League*; West Brom v Leicester *Sky Sports Premier League*
Sky Bet League One
Ipswich v Wigan (noon) *Sky Sports Football*
FA Women's Super League
Birmingham v Man Utd; Chelsea v Bristol City (12.30pm) *BBC red button*; Everton v Tottenham (1pm); Man City v Brighton; Reading v Aston Villa
FA Women's C'ship
Blackburn v Charlton (1pm); Durham v Lewes (noon); London Bees v Liverpool; Sheff Utd v Leicester
Rugby union
Gallagher Premiership
Leciester v Northampton (2pm); London Irish v Worcester (3pm); Sale v Bath (3pm); Saracens v Exeter (4.30pm); Wasps v Bristol (12.30pm)
Cricket (2pm unless stated)
Second ODI
England v Australia, Old Trafford (1pm) *Sky Sports Cricket*
Vitality T20 Blast
Central Group Worcestershire v Warwickshrie, New Road (1pm); Glamorgan v Northamptonshire, Swalec Stadium; Somerset v Gloucestershire, Taunton
North Group Derbyshire v Nottinghamshire, Trent Bridge; Durham v Leicestershire, Riverside
Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy
North Diamonds v Sparks, Headingley (10.30am); Thunder v Lightning, Aigburth (10.30am)
South Vipers v Storm, Rose Bowl (10.30am); Sunrisers v Stars, Chelmsford (10.30am)
Formula One
Tuscan Grand Prix
Mugello *Sky Sports F1*
Racing
Bath, Chelmsford, Wolverhampton

Sport
Football Uefa Nations League

Liverpool's Williams leaves it late to keep Wales winning

Wales 1
N Williams 90

Bulgaria 0

Ben Fisher
Cardiff City Stadium

It has not been a bad few days for Neco Williams. Four days on from making his Wales debut, the Wrexham-born teenager popped up to score a stoppage-time winner, heading in after getting his "fringe on the ball", as he so modestly put it.

The 19-year-old Liverpool defender arrived in the box with purpose as one second-half substitute supplied another. One Williams located another, with Jonny hanging an inviting cross towards the back post for Neco to nod in and condemn Bulgaria to a Nations League defeat.

Williams wheeled away before a pile-on ensued. Ryan Giggs raised a smile on the touchline and Gareth Bale, who completed 90 minutes for the first time since January, embraced the full-back, who superbly beat the Bulgaria winger Spas Delev to head goalwards in the nick of time and earn a youthful Wales a fourth consecutive victory without reply. The have won four competitive games in a row for the first time since 2003. Next up? England in a Wembley friendly next month.

Williams will likely come up against Trent Alexander-Arnold, with whom he tasted winning the Premier League at Anfield in June, but things could have played out differently had the Football Association got their way. "England were trying to ring my agent a lot and wanting to speak to me but I'm Welsh, my family is Welsh and for me it was always going to be Wales," he said. "It will be a great game but with the quality we have in this team, I think we are going to prove to them that we are capable of beating them."

▲ *Neco Williams, pursued by Gareth Bale, celebrates his injury-time goal*
ANDREW BOYERS/REUTERS

But, make no mistake, this was a torrid and pedestrian game. If Giggs conceded Thursday's performance in Finland was gritty as opposed to free flowing, this was stodgy and, at times, a nonevent. Bale had a shot blocked and David Brooks rattled the woodwork on his return to the team but clear-cut chances were at a premium.

> ***'It wasn't a vintage game but in the end we got what we deserved'***
>
> **Ryan Giggs**
> *Wales manager*

Giggs tweaked personnel from midweek, with Matthew Smith of Manchester City and Brooks of Bournemouth replacing Dylan Levitt and Jonny Williams. Bale was withdrawn in Helsinki with one eye on this match and the Wales captain, an increasingly peripheral figure at Real Madrid, for whom he played only 48 minutes across 12 matches after La Liga resumed in June, lasted the distance. "The last game I was struggling but those 45 minutes did me well and I was happy to get through 90 minutes," Bale said.

Hal Robson-Kanu - recalled to the Wales squad this month two years on from retiring from international duty - arrived on the hour in place of Kieffer Moore for his first appearance in a Wales shirt for 1,063 days but found the Bulgaria defence equally stubborn. Only occasionally did a lukewarm game hot up, with Brooks stabbing wide on the volley after latching on to an unconvincing backward header by the defender Kristian Dimitrov.

The sound of the supporters singing Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau from their last game here in November, when Aaron Ramsey sealed European Championship qualification against Hungary, played over the speakers as the players sang the national anthem but the game itself failed to inspire. Daniel James stung the palms of Georgi Georgiev, the Bulgaria goalkeeper, after a neat give-and-go with Brooks but Neco Williams, who replaced Connor Roberts with 25 minutes left, was the unlikely hero.

"It wasn't vintage but in the end we got what we deserved," Giggs said.

For Wales, the goal represented another late winner after Moore's intervention 10 minutes from time in Helsinki. "It's a good trait to have," Giggs said. "It wasn't the flowing football we have produced in the past but I think that is to do with the time of the season, the fitness and the sharpness of the players. We have had some good clean sheets and when you have clean sheets it always give you a chance."

Wales
4-2-3-1
Hennessey; Roberts (N Williams 65), Ampadu, Lockyer, Davies; Morrell, Smith; Bale, Brooks (J Williams 76), James; Moore (Robson-Kanu 61)
Subs not used
Ward, Davies, Gunter, Cabango, Lawrence, Vaulks, Levitt, Wilson, Matondo

Bulgaria
4-3-3
Georgiev; Cicinho, Dimitrov, Nedyalkov, Goranov; Karabelyov, Kostadinov, Ivanov (Delev 70); Karagaren, Kraev (Iliev 61), Nedelev (Krastev 82)
Subs not used
Mihaylov, Lukov, S Popov, V Popov, Rabotov, Galabov, Kovachev, Isa, Tsvetkov

Referee Fábio Veríssimo (Por)

Kenny's Dublin bow falls flat after Charlton tributes

Republic of Ireland 0

Finland 1
Jensen 63

Paul Doyle

For the Republic of Ireland's first match in Dublin since the death of Jack Charlton, the stadium was festooned with banners paying tribute to the country's most successful manager. But this was also the first home game of Stephen Kenny, who aims to bring similar results but with an entirely different style. Maybe he can take encouragement from the fact that Charlton also lost his first match in Dublin 1-0. There was little else about a dreary encounter to gladden Irish hearts.

The only goal of Charlton's first game was scored by Wales's Ian Rush; Kenny's men were beaten by a substitute in a hurry, Fredrik Jensen netting 18 seconds after coming off Finland's bench. The visitors could have won by more.

Kenny stuck with eight of the players who started in Bulgaria but changed all three of his midfielders, bringing in Robbie Brady and Harry Arter as well as giving a senior debut to Brighton's Jayson Molumby. None of the three newcomers did enough to suggest they will displace Conor Hourihane, Jeff Hendrick and James McCarthy for next month's Euro 2020 play-off against Slovakia.

"Controlling matches is very important to me," Kenny said before kick-off but Finland made the more commanding start. They should have taken the lead in the ninth minute when Robert Taylor, a Finn with an English father, found the same sort of gap in midfield that Bulgaria exploited for their goal on Thursday. He threaded a pass through to Teemu Pukki, who was thwarted by smart goalkeeping by Darren Randolph.

Ireland responded quickly. After a good run down the right and a decent cross by Callum O'Dowda, the ball found Arter, who forced Lukas Hradecky into action with a reasonable shot from 25 yards. But that was all that the Finland goalkeeper had to do in a dismal first half.

▲ *Ireland's Shane Duffy looks dejected after the final whistle*

Ireland tried to pass progressively but struggled to find fluency. Adam Idah, the 19-year-old Norwich forward again chosen to lead the line, got almost no useful service and made little impact. David McGoldrick had more effect in a late appearance off the bench.

Finland, more compact and coherent than Ireland, could have taken the lead in the 22nd minute but Juhani Ojala headed wide from a corner.

Ireland mustered more intensity in the second half. Brady, whose passing mostly disappointed, won the ball well before feeding Idah, who helped it on to Connolly. The striker bustled his way into the box and lashed a shot into the side-netting.

Ireland fell behind to an easily avoidable goal. Finland profited from confusion in midfield to slip the ball through to Taylor, who sent a low pass across the face of goal. Jensen pulled away from Stevens at the back post to prod the ball home with his first touch.

Two substitutes almost combined for an equaliser three minutes later, Callum Robinson forcing the Finland defence into a mistake before McGoldrick had a shot charged down. Taylor, Pukki and Ahlo missed chances to increase Finland's margin of victory before Shane Duffy had an opportunity to stage another late rescue act for Ireland but headed over from a corner.

Ireland grasped for positives. "The more we work with this manager, the best will come out of us," Brady said. That manager, meanwhile, said: "This gives us real food for thought, that's for sure."

Republic of Ireland
4-3-3
Randolph; Doherty, Duffy, Egan, Stevens; Molumby (McGoldrick 66), Arter, Brady; O'Dowda (Robinson 59), Idah, Connolly (McClean 77)
Subs not used
Kelleher, Travers, Browne, Coleman, Hendrick, Hourihane, Lenihan, Long, McCarthy

Finland
3-5-2
Hradecky; Väisänen, Ojala, O'Shaughnessy; Alho, Kamara, Sparv, Taylor, Hämäläinen (Uronen 79); Pohjanpalo (Jensen 63), Pukki
Subs not used
Granlund, Hostikka, Jaakola, Joronen, Karjalainen, Kauko, Lam, Niskanen, Soiri, Tuominen

Referee Fabio Maresca (It)

Results

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Group A2

Denmark	(0) **0**	**Belgium** Denayer 9, Mertens 76	(1) **2**
Iceland	(0) **0**	**England** Sterling 90pen	(0) **1**

Group A3

Portugal Cancelo 4, Jota 58 João Félix 70, André Silva 90	(1) **4**	**Croatia** Petkovic 90	(0) **1**
Sweden	(0) **0**	**France** Mbappé 41	(1) **1**

Group A4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Spain	2	1	1	0	5	1	+4	**4**
Ukraine	2	1	0	1	2	5	-3	**3**
Germany	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	**2**
Switzerland	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	**1**

Spain Ramos 3pen 29 Fati 32, F Torres 84	(3) **4**	**Ukraine**	(0) **0**
Switzerland Widmer 58	(0) **1**	**Germany** Gündogan 14	(1) **1**

Group B3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Russia	2	2	0	0	6	3	+3	**6**
Hungary	2	1	0	1	3	3	0	**3**
Turkey	2	0	1	1	0	1	-1	**1**
Serbia	2	0	1	1	1	3	-2	**1**

Hungary Sallai 62 Nikolics 70	(0) **2**	**Russia** Miranchuk 15 Ozloev 34, Fernandes 46	(2) **3**
Serbia	(0) **0**	**Turkey**	(0) **0**

Group B4

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Wales	2	2	0	0	2	0	+2	**6**
Finland	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	**3**
Republic of Ireland	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	**1**
Bulgaria	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	**1**

Rep of Ireland	(0) **0**	**Finland** Jensen 63	(0) **0**
Wales N Williams 90	(0) **1**	**Bulgaria**	(0) **0**

Group C1

Azerbaijan Sheydayev 43	(1) **1**	**Luxembourg** Krivotsyuk 48og Rodrigues 72pen	(0) **2**
Cyprus	(0) **0**	**Montenegro** Jovetic 60 73	(0) **2**

Group C2

Estonia	(0) **0**	**Georgia** Kacharava 32	(1) **1**
North Macedonia Alioski 5pen Nestorovski 38pen	(2) **2**	**Armenia** Barseghyan 90pen	(0) **1**

Group C3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Greece	2	1	1	0	2	1	+1	**4**
Slovenia	2	1	1	0	1	0	+1	**4**
Kosovo	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	**1**
Moldova	2	0	1	1	1	2	-1	**1**

Kosovo Berisha 82	(0) **1**	**Greece** Limnios 2, Siovas 51	(1) **2**
Slovenia Bohar 28	(1) **1**	**Moldova**	(0) **0**

Group D1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Faroe Islands	2	2	0	0	4	2	+2	**6**
Latvia	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	**2**
Malta	2	0	1	1	2	3	-1	**1**
Andorra	2	0	1	1	0	1	-1	**1**

Andorra	(0) **0**	**Faroe Islands** K Olsen 31	(1) **1**
Malta Nwoko 15	(1) **1**	**Latvia** Guillaumier 25og	(1) **1**

Group D2

Gibraltar Torrilla 42	(1) **1**	**San Marino**	(0) **0**

CARABAO CUP

First round Barnsley 1 Nottm Forest 0; Birmingham 0 Cambridge Utd 1; Bolton 1 Bradford 2; Bristol City 2 Exeter 0; Crawley 1 Millwall 3; Crewe 1 Lincoln 2; Derby 0 Barrow 0 (Derby win 3-2 on pens); Fleetwood 3 Wigan 2; Forest Green 1 Leyton Orient 2; Gillingham 1 Southend 0; Grimsby 1 Morecambe 1 (Morecambe win 4-3 on pens); Ipswich 3 Bristol Rovers 0; Luton 3 Norwich 1; MK Dons 0 Coventry 1; Newport County 2 Swansea 0; Northampton 3 Cardiff 0; Oldham 3 Carlisle 0; Oxford Utd 1 AFC Wimbledon 1 (Oxford Utd win 4-3 on pens); Peterborough 0 Cheltenham 1; Plymouth 3 QPR 2; Reading 3 Colchester 1; Salford City 1 Rotherham 1 (Salford City win 4-2 on pens); Scunthorpe 1 Port Vale 2; Sunderland 0 Hull 0 (Hull win 5-4 on pens); Swindon 1 Charlton 3; Tranmere 1 Harrogate 1 (Harrogate win 8-7 on pens); Walsall 0 Sheff Wed 0 (Sheff Wed win 4-2 on pens); Huddersfield 0 Rochdale 1; Brentford 1 Wycombe 1 (Brentford win 4-2 on pens)

FA WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE

Arsenal Little 15, Miedema 33 78 Roord 40 63 82	(3) **6**	**Reading** Carter 89	(0) **1**
Aston Villa	(0) **0**	**Manchester City** Stanway 7 21	(2) **2**
Brighton Connolly 60, Kaagman 62	(0) **2**	**Birmingham**	(0) **0**
Bristol City	(0) **0**	**Everton** Magill 7, Graham 19 62pen Gauvin 90	(2) **4**
Man Utd Galton 79	(0) **1**	**Chelsea** Kerr 25	(1) **1**
Tottenham Fisk 53og	(0) **1**	**West Ham** Leon 57	(0) **1**

FA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

Charlton 2 Crystal Palace 2; Coventry Utd 3 London Bees 1; Leicester 3 Blackburn 0; Liverpool 1 Durham 1; London City 1 Sheffield Utd 4

Sterling emerges as England's latest heroic figure

▼ *Raheem Sterling has reached a comfortable peak in his game, scoring 11 in his last 12 England appearances*
ARNI TORFASON/BPI/SHUTTERSTOCK

The Manchester City forward rose above a dismal team display to gain a kind of personal revenge for his Euro 2016 misery against the same opponents

Barney Ronay

Squint a little and there was something weirdly retro about England's victory in Iceland on Saturday night. This was a painful occasion for Gareth Southgate's under-conditioned team, a game where the neat little touches didn't stick, where the bounce was off, the grass unkind, the ball filled with helium, where England's midfield seemed, somehow, to be always facing the wrong way.

As the ball was shuttled cautiously across those deep blue defensive lines, this felt a bit like watching old, analogue, square-screened England. We shall remember them (if you really insist), that version of Albion who lived in fear of foreign fields, unkind referees, the ball itself.

In the grand tradition England even found a hero, a star player with just enough juice in the tank to drag this discordant ensemble across the line. Raheem Sterling was England's best player against Iceland. A low bar perhaps. But on an off-day for everyone involved Sterling seemed to have decided early on that his own off-day was still going to be enough.

It was an effort of sporting will as much as anything else. Sterling didn't look particularly free in his movements, or particularly in sync after playing just 90 minutes in the last month of this strange, sallow, plague-shadowed summer. But he kept on doing things, seeking the ball, trying to play. He touched the ball 105 times, took three shots at goal, completed nine dribbles, made four crosses.

By sheer weight of numbers his influence came to tell. It was Sterling's excellent deep cross to the back post that made Harry Kane's (incorrectly) disallowed first-half goal. His chest control and shot produced England's late penalty. His alarmingly central penalty kick then won the game (although look at Sterling's eyes and it's clear he knew that Hannes Thor Halldórsson had vacated the middle of his goal).

Probably it was even Sterling's expertly-crossed fingers of destiny that led to Birkir Bjarnason's appalling missed penalty kick two minutes into stoppage time, a kind of dad-at-the-rec attempt to clang the ball into the top-most part of the top corner that sent the ball veering off into the empty plastic seats.

Look closely and in among the grimaces and shouts of relief Sterling was the only England player smiling (quite broadly), as he ran back into the box to clap Jordan Pickford on the back.

Although by that stage, true to the lone-England-hero-trope, you half-expected him to be pounding his three lions badge, head encased in a gleaming conical bandage, shirt glistening with his own blood; as for one night only Sterling occupied the familiar last-ditch rescue role, a lineage that stretches back through Bryan Robson, Wayne Rooney, David Beckham and various other day-saving magic-bullet players down the decades.

To complete the sense of a heritage performance in Reykjavik, England also played the game out with an obvious blind spot on show. And with a manager on the touchline who, for all his successes, does seem to have at least one significant tactical achilles heel in the straitjacketed caution of England's midfield. Southgate's preference for a defence-minded double pivot over players whose chief skill is to use the ball was evident again here, the other side of that late rescue job.

Sterling first, though. Football loves its schmaltzy, cyclical storylines. If we really are going to do catharsis, silencing the knockers, the Boethian Wheel Of Fortuna, it is worth remembering Sterling also had the worst possible time against Iceland four years ago. Barracked by a section of his own fans, subbed off after an hour, then assailed with faux outrage in the newspapers the next day over the "blinging" house and kitschy kitchen sink he'd bought for his mother to live in.

Hysteria aside, it is the case that Sterling wasn't an effective England player in those early days. His form began to bloom under Southgate, with the last two years a period of genuine ignition. Sterling scored twice in his first 45 England games, but 11 now in his last 12. He seems to have reached a comfortable peak in his game, to spend a lot of time doing the things he knows he's very good at, never dwelling on his weaknesses or the occasional ragged moments; and who is above all a complete team player, relentlessly focused on bringing his influence to bear.

Jordan Pickford sees Birkir Bjarnason's injury-time penalty miss the target

It has been a process to reach this point. Sterling has always been less technically adept than, say, Jadon Sancho: he has fewer tricks, a less startling range of dribbling skills, a less convincing connection with the ball. But he has become something else, an exceptionally clever wide midfielder, utterly fearless in his movements, draining to mark and play against, a thrilling spectacle to watch in the flesh simply for the intelligence of his movements on the flank. It was this ability to find space that eventually told in Reykjavik.

England face a downhill sprint from here. The next two and a half years could provide three major tournament finals in quick succession. Sterling will be key to Southgate's plans in that period, although hopefully not in the role of last-ditch needs-must saviour.

The players may have been undercooked in Iceland. But there was something else too, a knot in the middle of this team that still hasn't been unravelled. This is, of course, the central midfield: all football managers are cautious at heart. Southgate's own area of mild tactical neuroses is here, in his preference for a deep defensive shield, or at least two central midfielders whose instinct is to hold the space.

Under this system England's attack has often thrived against weaker opponents. But they have also struggled against teams who sit deep, or against more technically adept midfielders with the skills to overwhelm England's hard-running artisans.

Belgium are the No 1 team in the world right now. The Nations League game at Wembley next month isn't the perfect stage to fight back against this tendency - that was Iceland on Saturday night, where Jack Grealish and Mason Mount remained on the bench and Phil Foden was moored to his left-sided detail.

England will only improve as fitness returns and the current jet-lagged summer recedes. This team has earned the right to grind out an unlovely win. But history suggests success comes from ironing out those points of resistance. Sterling, Kane, Sancho, Greenwood and Rashford is an attack that deserves a midfield of similar ambition.

Fixtures

Tomorrow Nations League
Denmark (a) *7.45pm*
Thurs 8 Oct Friendly
Wales (h) *8pm*
Sun 11 Oct Nations League
Belgium (h) *5pm*
Wed 14 Oct Nations League
Denmark (h) *7.45pm*
Sun 15 Nov Nations League
Belgium (a) *7.45pm*
Wed 18 Nov Nations League
Iceland (h) *7.45pm*

Southgate 'hammers home' discipline message to players

Walker's red card 'could have cost us the game against Iceland', says manager

David Hytner

Gareth Southgate says he will not discard Kyle Walker because of his red card in Saturday's 1-0 Nations League win over Iceland but he will "hammer home" the importance of discipline to each of his players as he prepares for tomorrow's game in Denmark and the challenges beyond.

The manager has an eye on next summer's European Championship finals and he is aware of how sendings-off have damaged England at major tournaments in the past. He was in the England team when David Beckham was dismissed in the 1998 World Cup last-16 exit against Argentina.

Southgate made the point about the dangers of indiscipline to his players when he was the England Under-21s manager and, after Walker became the first player to be sent off during his four years in charge of the senior team, he said his squad had to be similarly mindful.

England beat Iceland 1-0 thanks to Raheem Sterling's 90th-minute penalty and an even later miss from the spot by Iceland. But Walker's dismissal in the 70th minute for a reckless lunge that brought a second yellow card had put England under pressure and Southgate knows his team can ill-afford that kind of misjudgment in a major game. He said he would not judge Walker on one moment but when he highlighted the fierce competition for places at full-back, it sounded as if Walker was on thin ice.

▲ *Gareth Southgate knows how dismissals have damaged England*

"Kyle knows he made an error that shouldn't have happened and he's been very honest about holding his hands up," Southgate said. "There is competition for places. Kieran Trippier did an excellent job at left-back. But I am not going to rule Kyle out in the long term on that one moment.

"We were very conscious with the under-21s to talk to the team about discipline because we've learned what had happened with the seniors in the past. The same applies now.

"It's the first time we've had a red card in my four years and it makes the game so difficult. It could have cost us the game. We got away with it but it's something all of the players ... it's a good way to learn, to still win the game, but to have to hammer those points home because it's critical."

Energy crisis

Burnout risk across unique season means changes for Denmark trip

David Hytner

Consider for a moment how Harry Kane was able to prepare for Saturday's Nations League tie with Iceland in Reykjavik. The England captain had been on holiday with his family in the Bahamas when the island was added to the United Kingdom's quarantine list on 7 August.

Kane had 24 hours to get back in order to avoid the mandatory 14 days in isolation and he said that it was not possible. "It's not the easiest place to get back from, there's no direct flights," Kane said. "So I stayed there for another week and then had to quarantine when I got back." Could Kane have done more to return straight away or, at least, earlier than he did? Was a private jet an option? It is hard to say. But what it meant was that Kane was in quarantine pretty much up to the moment he reported for England duty last Monday. The England captain worked out at his gym at home but, before the 1-0 victory over Iceland, he had trained only a few times as part of a squad.

It was a long way from being ideal for him or the England manager, Gareth Southgate, and Kane's situation was far from unique. Raheem Sterling, for example, said on Saturday night that he considered the game to have been his third training session of the week - and he had done nothing before that, given he was still playing in the Champions League with Manchester City on 15 August.

Sterling's lack of a meaningful summer break had a short-term upside; his fitness for Iceland was good and he was able to drive the team in the later stages. He scored what proved to be the winning goal with a 90th-minute penalty that he won himself.

Southgate had noted that his fittest players were those who had been involved with their clubs in last month's Champions League and Europa League finals tournaments, namely Sterling, Kyle Walker, Phil Foden, Kieran Trippier and Mason Greenwood. The worry with these players concerns whether they will hit the wall at some point further down the line.

Kane was sharp in the opening 20 minutes in Reykjavik and he was denied what would have been his 11th goal in seven England appearances by an incorrect offside decision. But he faded badly, if understandably, to the point where Southgate felt he did not have the legs in the closing stages - when England were playing with 10 men after Walker's red card. He replaced him in the 78th minute, introducing Manchester United's Greenwood in his place for a debut.

England were tasked with unpicking Iceland's tightly drilled system, which allowed for precious little space between the lines and no counterattacks, and Southgate made an interesting point when he said that quality and incision in the final third was the "last part to come" after a lay-off. But tomorrow, Southgate and England will have to do it all again - against Denmark in Copenhagen.

Will Kane start? Can he start? On one level, it is ridiculous to ask the question but on the other, this is Kane and, when fit, he starts. Frankly, even when he is not fully fit, he starts. Regular Kane watchers have lost count of the number of times when it appears as if it will be too much for him to power through a particular game only for him to do so.

The Kane issue is delicate, not least as the new Premier League season starts this coming weekend, and it is mirrored by similar teasers in virtually every position. Southgate insists he is not under pressure from the clubs to rest particular players but, even when he thinks about the selection purely on his terms, he faces a difficult balancing act. Changes feel inevitable.

> ***'Energy will be key against Denmark. It's a bit of a needs must situation'***
>
> **Gareth Southgate**
> *England manager*

"The most important thing will be to really assess who can start, what gives us the freshness but keeps enough experience," Southgate said when asked specifically if he could name Kane in the XI. "Energy will be key. It was impossible to expect the players to be at their best against Iceland, given not only the time since their last competitive games but also the shortage of training minutes.

"The clubs have been really understanding. Everybody knows this whole season is unique and they know that whenever we can we try to manage their players as well as we possibly can. We also have an important season - we can't just focus everything on one game.

"We felt we wanted to be strong against Iceland in the lineup we put out and now we have just got to assess that for Tuesday and pick what we can to get the result." Southgate's other main consideration in Copenhagen will be the formation, as it is understood he wants to trial a 3-4-3 lineup in order to develop more options and greater flexibility.

"It is a bit of a 'needs must' [because of player fitness and availability] but it is healthy in terms of the way we want to play," Southgate said. "We can't just be rigid. We don't want to just stick to one way of playing if we are knocking on the door and not getting the number of shots on goal we want as happened against Iceland."

◀ *Harry Kane was up against an obdurate Iceland defence*
HARALDUR GUDJONSSON/AFP VIA GETTY

Football In brief

Nations League

Ramos double puts Spain top of group

Sergio Ramos scored twice as **Spain** surged to the top of Nations League A's Group Four 4 with a 4-0 win over **Ukraine** in Madrid. Ramos gave his side the lead with a third-minute penalty, then doubled it just before the half-hour. Barcelona's Ansu Fati became Spain's youngest scorer aged 17 and 311 days when he scored the third and Manchester City's Ferran Torres completed the scoring. Spain had begun their campaign with a draw in **Germany**, who had to settle for a share of the points again, this time in **Switzerland**. Ilkay Gündogan gave Germany a first-half lead but Silvan Widmer equalised. **Russia** have maximum points from their first two games in League B's Group Three 3 after resisting **Hungary**'s revival in Budapest. Anton Miranchuk, Magomed Ozdoyev and Mário Fernandes put Russia 3-0 up early in the second half before Roland Sallai and Nemanja Nikolic reduced the deficit. **Guardian sport**

Carabao Cup draw

Newcomers Harrogate eye Baggies shock

The EFL newcomers Harrogate Town face a dream trip to Premier League West Brom in the second round of the Carabao Cup. The reward for Saturday's win over Tranmere Rovers on penalties is a visit West Brom, themselves only recently promoted back to the top flight. Burnley will play Sheffield United at Turf Moor in an all-Premier League second-round tie.The draw for the third round was also made and, should Harrogate progress, they will host Southampton or Brentford. **PA Media**

Newcastle

Wilson and Lewis set for Tyneside moves

Newcastle are discussing personal terms with the striker Callum Wilson after having a £20m bid accepted by Bournemouth. Aston Villa, who also had an offer accepted for the 28-year-old, pulled out of a move over the weekend. Newcastle are also set to reinforce their defence with the £13.5m signing of the 22-year-old Norwich defender Jamal Lewis. **Ben Fisher**

Callum Wilson is set to stay in the Premier League with Newcastle

▼ *A jubilant Pierre Gasly is carried by members of his AlphaTauri team*
DAN ISTITENE/FORMULA 1 VIA GETTY

Gasly makes music after Hamilton feels the bad vibe of a closed pit lane

Giles Richards
Monza

The drama Formula One so badly needed found the grandest stage of all at the Italian Grand Prix and was celebrated with that most stirring of anthems, La Marseillaise– a piece not heard at grands prix for some time.

The winner, France's Pierre Gasly cut an emotional figure, a mixture of disbelief, ecstasy and pride as the music echoed round the circuit. He had also ensured that in the form of his team AlphaTauri the Italian flag was also flying with abandon.

In contrast, a seemingly certain victory had turned to ashes for Lewis Hamilton as motor racing delivered a reminder it can be a cruel sport.

Mercedes had made a rare error they admitted had cost Hamilton the win. They held up their hands for the mistake, albeit with qualifications, but Toto Wolff accepted F1 had gained as his juggernaut was temporarily diverted. The Mercedes chief called the outcome a victory for the sport as a result of the entertainment it delivered.

Hamilton finished seventh, having led until the halfway point when the championship leader was given a penalty for illegally entering the pit lane. Carlos Sainz Jr came second for McLaren, with Lance Stroll third for Racing Point, Lando Norris fourth for McLaren and Valtteri Bottas fifth for Mercedes.

Hamilton took centre stage for the first half of the race while the young guns Gasly and Sainz provided a thrilling climax to the second. There will be debate and recriminations but what cannot be denied is that Gasly earned his plaudits. It is the 24-year-old's first grand prix win and the Frenchman closed out with verve and steel. It was a victory his countrymen have not had the opportunity to celebrate for a long time - the last French driver to win a grand prix was Olivier Panis at Monaco in 1996.

Gasly's achievement was especially gratifying coming just over a year after he was demoted from the senior Red Bull team to its sister outfit after the Hungarian GP. There was no gloating but there can be no little pleasure in making one's point so publicly.

Monza also holds a special place for his team. It is officially their first win but only as AlphaTauri. The team's only other win came in their previous guise as Toro Rosso and was also at Monza, when Sebastian Vettel won in 2008. Their joy was irrepressible.

Hamilton seemingly had it in his hands from pole. He got clean away on the drag to the first chicane while Bottas had a shocker, falling back to sixth place. The race settled into a familiar pattern, with Hamilton unchallenged at the front.

For Ferrari a dismal weekend got only worse. Vettel suffered a brake failure on lap five and was forced to retire at the end of the lap.

▲ *Lewis Hamilton finished seventh after a 10-second stop-go penalty*

What had looked routine for Hamilton turned in a moment. When Kevin Magnussen retired on lap 20 the safety car was called and Hamilton dived into the pits for new tyres. His Mercedes was the only one of the leading cars to do so. The pit-lane entry was closed to allow marshals to push Magnussen's broken-down Haas to the pit lane. Hamilton was immediately investigated by the stewards. In contrast AlphaTauri had pitted Gasly just before the safety car was deployed and when the pit lane was open.

Wolff admitted it was a "weird sequence of events". Mercedes had not expected the safety car to be deployed nor were they aware of the pit-lane closure until a strategist at their base in Brackley brought it to their attention.

"This was a sequence that screwed Lewis's race. We are not happy but we have to take it on the chin," Wolff said. He conceded there had been confusion but that Hamilton had not seen the two yellow crosses on the outside of the pit lane that denoted it was closed, absolving his driver from blame.

Racing resumed on lap 23. Only to stop almost immediately after Charles Leclerc cannoned into the wall at Parabolica. He was fortunate to walk away from the crash and it brought the race to a halt with a red flag.

Hamilton went to see the stewards in the 27 minutes the race was stopped under the red flag but a 10-second stop-go penalty was still issued. A flurry of stops and chaos turned the race on its head. In third when racing resumed, Gasly beat Stroll on the restart and when Hamilton took his penalty almost immediately, Gasly became the leader.

Hamilton's race was in tatters. He emerged from his penalty in last place, 30 seconds off the lead and with 24 laps remaining. Sainz hunted down Gasly and closed to within two seconds with 10 laps to go. Yet Gasly showed pluck and nerve to hold his lead against what was clearly a quicker car. With two laps left he was less than a second ahead.

Hamilton did his best to come though the field from 17th place and made it into the points in seventh, salvaging something from the race and still leads the drivers' championship from Bottas by 164 to 117 points.

One small boost for Hamilton was that Max Verstappen, who had been second in the standings at the start of the day, had to retire on lap 30. The day, though, belonged to Gasly, who made the perfect transition from understudy to lead.

Champion's woe
'I definitely hold myself accountable'

Giles Richards
Monza

Lewis Hamilton has accepted he and Mercedes were at fault in the error that cost him a likely win at the Italian Grand Prix. The British driver conceded they held themselves accountable and would examine the circumstances to ensure they would not be repeated. The race winner Pierre Gasly in contrast was hugely happy with what he felt was a definitive display of his fighting spirit.

Hamilton had led for half the race until he was given a penalty for entering the pit lane when it was closed. It pushed him to the back of the field from where he did well to take seventh. The team's decision to call him in had been costly and Hamilton had not seen the signs on the outside of the pit lane entry – two yellow crosses – indicating the pit lane was closed.

"I am happy with how I have driven today," he said. "I kept pushing, seventh was the best I could do considering I was 30 seconds behind the last car and the challenges I faced. I am grateful of the lessons learned, these are the days you learn the most. None of us love losing. Nobody is happy but we have to hold one another accountable, I definitely hold myself accountable for not seeing those signs but there was a sequence of things that we did as a teams that were not perfect."

Gasly had been demoted from Red Bull to AlphaTauri last season in a sudden move when he was deemed to not be returning the results the team required after just 12 races. With a fine drive to hold of McLaren's Carlos Sainz, the 24-year-old was rightly proud of making his mark with his first grand prix win.

"It was a tough moment last year," he said. "I grew up with four older brothers and as a child I had to go through difficult moments which built me a strong character. I always had to fight for everything I wanted and always managed to turn something negative into positive energy. I knew that last year what happened, I know that deep inside I did not feel it was fair and I wanted to make a clear point that I am fast and know what I can do."

The Frenchman is still only in his third season but has been putting in repeatedly impressive performances this year of which this win was the pinnacle and has indicated that he would like a second shot with the Red Bull team.

"I have been fighting for victories, poles and championships in my career and that's what I want to achieve," he said. "I worked hard with the team and I knew it was in my hands to show my potential and tried to extract more from myself. I cannot be happier. I know how important it is for me to get my first win in F1."

'I cannot be happier. I know how important it is to get my first win'

Pierre Gasly
AlphaTauri driver

◀ Lewis Hamilton leads Pierre Gasly after the restart but he had to pit at the end of the lap for his stop-go penalty

Results and standings

1	**Pierre Gasly** Fr AlphaTauri	25pts *1hr 47min 06.056sec*
2	**Carlos Sainz** Sp McLaren	18pts *+0.415sec*
3	**Lance Stroll** Can Racing Point	15pts *+3.358*
4	**Lando Norris** GB McLaren	12pts *+6.000*
5	**Valtteri Bottas** Fin Mercedes	10pts *+7.108*
6	**Daniel Ricciardo** Aus Renault	8pts *+8.391*
7	**Lewis Hamilton** GB Mercedes	7pts* *+17.245*
8	**Esteban Ocon** Fr Renault	4pts *+18.691*
9	**Daniil Kvyat** Rus AlphaTauri	2pts *+22.208*
10	**Sergio Pérez** Mex Racing Point	1pts *+23.224*

*bonus point for fastest lap of 1min 22.746sec

Also finished
11 **Nicholas Latifi** Can Williams *+32.876*;
12 **Romain Grosjean** Fr Haas *+35.164*;
13 **Kimi Räikkönen** Fin Alfa Romeo *+36.312*;
14 **George Russell** GB Williams *+36.593*;
15 **Alexander Albon** Tha Red Bull *+37.533*;
16 **Antonio Giovinazzi** It Alfa Romeo *+55.199*

Not classified
17 **Max Verstappen** Neth Red Bull *30 laps*;
18 **Charles Leclerc** Mon Ferrari *23 laps*;
19 **Kevin Magussen** Den Haas *17 laps*;
20 **Sebastian Vettel** Ger Ferrari *6 laps*

Championship standings
Drivers: 1 **Lewis Hamilton** 164pts; 2 **Valtteri Bottas** 117; 3 **Max Verstappen** 110; 4 **Lance Stroll** 57; 5 **Lando Norris** 57; 6 **Alexander Albon** 48; 7 **Charles Leclerc** 45; 8 **Pierre Gasly** 43; 9 **Carlos Sainz** 41; 10 **Daniel Ricciardo** 41; 11 **Sergio Pérez** 34; 12 **Esteban Ocon** 30
Constructors: 1 **Mercedes** 281pts; 2 **Red Bull** 158; 3 **McLaren** 98; 4 **Racing Point** 82; 5 **Renault** 71; 6 **Ferrari** 61; 7 **AlphaTauri** 47; 8 **Alfa Romeo** 2; 9 **Haas** 1; 10 **Williams** 0

▼ Owen Farrell was sent off for this high tackle on Charlie Atkinson
MATTHEW IMPEY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Rugby union *Gallagher Premiership*

High time Farrell tackled his big issue

Jones will probably stick with his England captain but the fly-half must learn from mistakes to save his legacy

Rob Kitson

Even as he made ugly contact with the head of Wasps' young fly-half Charlie Atkinson, Owen Farrell knew he had messed up. Barely had he hit the ground himself before he could be seen lifting up both arms in apology, fully aware a red card was the only outcome. The ban heading his way threatens to hit Saracens just as hard.

When an England captain is involved in these kind of incidents, as Dylan Hartley and Martin Johnson will wryly tell you, there is no rest for the wicked. This collision looked particularly grim: a young, innocent victim floored by an aggressor with a bit of previous who should have known better. All at a time when violent high challenges are, rightly, under the microscope. If Farrell is available for Saracens's Champions' Cup quarter-final away to Leinster the sport will have much explaining to do.

There are all kinds of other possible implications but let's concentrate first on the actual tackle. Atkinson, not long out of Abingdon School, made his Premiership debut less than a fortnight ago. As he shaped to step inside, he seemed not to see the approaching black-shirted menace. Farrell had every opportunity to make a legal tackle, rather than the crude, one-arm smash that followed. A simple misjudgment?

Farrell could easily have gone lower and there appeared a measure of pent-up frustration involved. If he is lucky the judiciary will decide it was simply a mid-level offence with an entry-point suspension of six weeks, which can be mitigated downwards by up to 50%. If, however, the panel, which meets tomorrow night, decides it is a high-end misdemeanour, by a serial offender, the entry point will be 10 weeks with a five-week ban the best outcome.

Either way there appears no chance of Farrell participating in the Leinster quarter-final, around which his relegated club's entire season now hinges. If Saracens lose, their season will effectively be over, potentially sidelining England's captain from competitive rugby until the national team's game against the Barbarians at Twickenham on 25 October. When he plays again for Saracens remains to be seen.

It is also a state of affairs which, however much he claims otherwise, muddies the waters for Eddie Jones. Before the Saracens-Wasps game Jones was suggesting he had no plans to hand the captaincy to anyone else this coming winter.

"We haven't decided yet but at this stage there is no reason why it will not be Owen. He did a great job in the World Cup and the Six Nations. If he is fit and available, there is a very good chance he will be captain." Jones, unlike certain people now in power, is hardly going to do a U-turn based on a few shrill headlines. Equally, he would not be doing his job properly if he did not ask himself a basic question: is a captain with a suspect tackling technique my best leadership option? And if he is, what does that say about the overall culture of my squad and their capacity to learn from mistakes?

Maybe this will provide a Damascene moment prompting a conversion

One swinging arm in a club jersey, to be clear, is hardly the end of the world. Farrell remains a consummate professional, a world-class kicker and a certainty to make the Lions squad next year. Jones will surely have to advise Farrell, however, that any similar indiscretions will not be viewed benignly.

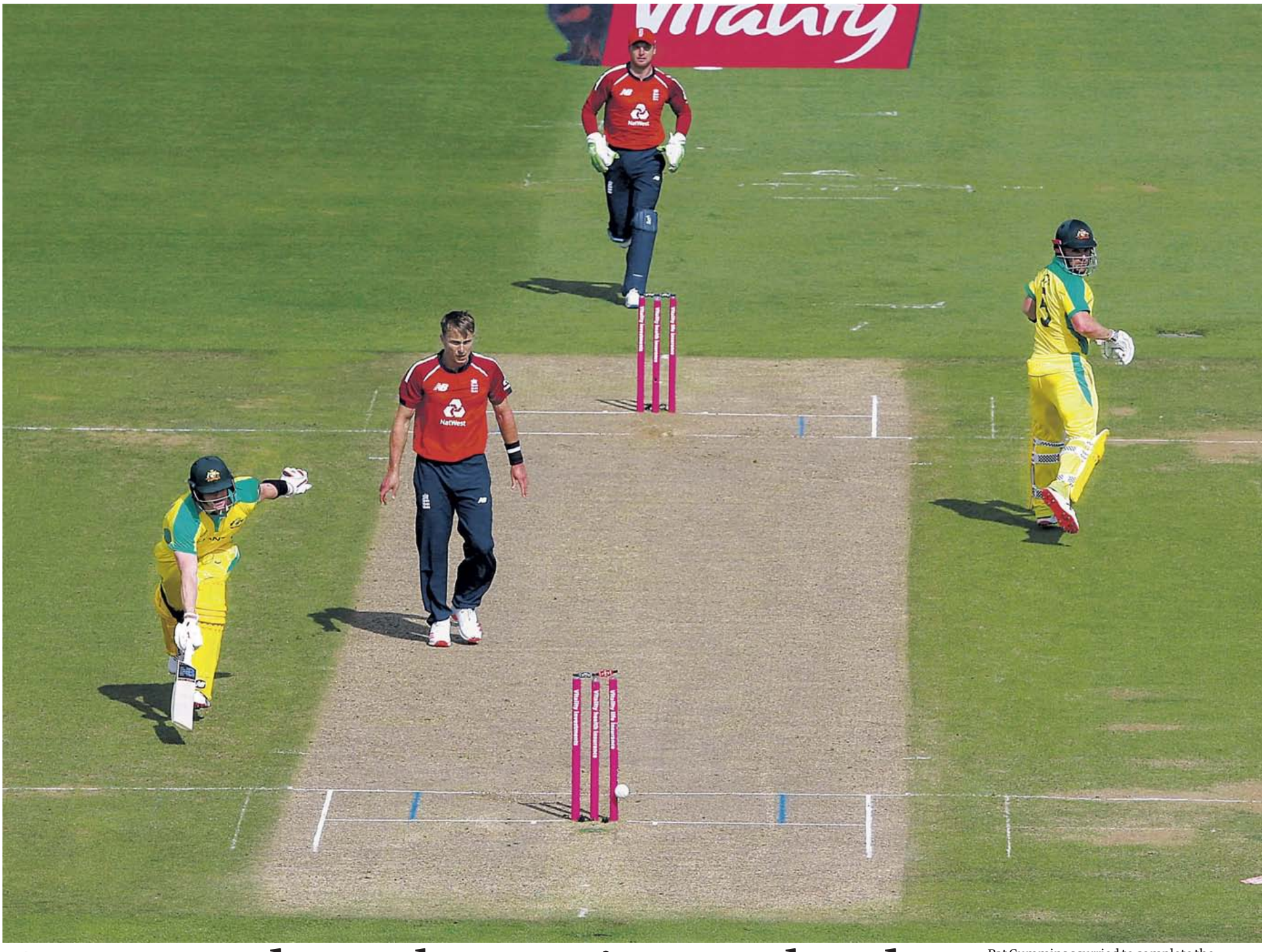
Maro Itoje is being widely touted as a potential Lions captain; if that scenario were to unfold, logic would suggest it makes Itoje a more than viable candidate to lead England into the 2023 World Cup in France.

The ball, then, is in Farrell's court, regardless of the disciplinary panel's verdict.

Maybe this weekend will prove a Damascene moment and prompt the most impressive conversion of his life: from single-minded, hair-trigger warrior to mature senior statesman, a man who can rise above life's minor irritations, play hard but absolutely fair, smile benignly at officials and charm the media on a daily basis.

An unrealistic fantasy? Not if he fancies retiring as a national figure to rival Jonny Wilkinson. It will not be straightforward and nor should we underestimate the stresses latterly felt by all Saracens players as, one by one, every single certainty in their lives has evaporated.

But, in addition to offering Atkinson a one-to-one mentoring session once the latter is fit again, Farrell needs to reflect on where he goes from here. He will be 29 in a little over a fortnight and, potentially, still has half a dozen more years to cement himself as an all-time England great. If that is his aim the king of the swingers needs to get a grip on himself.



Composed Buttler carries England to series win with masterful innings

Vic Marks
Ageas Bowl

Jos Buttler delivered a glorious demonstration of how to pace a run chase. The target, 158, was not formidable but, as the Australians are all too aware, such middling scores can be tricky to overhaul. But with Buttler at the crease there was no slip-up. He purred to an unbeaten 77 from 54 balls and finished the match with seven deliveries to spare with a straight six off Adam Zampa that cleared the boundary by about 40 yards. So England won the game by six wickets and have taken the series; if they win the final game tomorrow evening they overtake Australia as the No 1 T20 side in the ICC's rankings table.

Afterwards Eoin Morgan affirmed that he would play the best XI for the final game having hailed "a better bowling performance. Jofra [Archer] set the tone in that first over and when you've got a world-class player like Jos Buttler in form it makes the chase easier." Unsurprisingly Buttler will stay at the top of the order for the moment and the man himself acknowledged afterwards: "It's the best place to bat in T20 cricket and my favourite position but I'm happy to bat anywhere. It's up to the captain and coach."

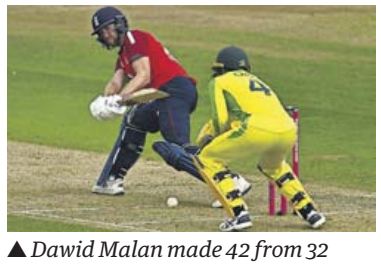
England dominated the match throughout. They bowled very fast and very well at the start. Archer's first over was sensational. The ball whistled through leaping off the pitch; the third one jagged back into David Warner, who was given out caught behind by umpire Mike Burns; curiously Warner reviewed but the replay revealed that the ball had brushed his glove.

Mark Wood bowled at a similar pace, too fast for Alex Carey, who edged more conventionally to the keeper. So Australia were three for two after two overs. At one point Morgan stationed three slips and a gully for Archer and this seemed more like a good idea than an impudent gesture.

Aaron Finch and Steve Smith began the recovery with both of them hitting massive leg-side sixes against 90mph deliveries; this was red-blooded cricket. Then at the end of the fifth over Smith called for an ambitious single and Morgan's throw from mid-on hit the stumps.

From 30 for three Australia did well to reach 157 for seven. Finch was often starved of the strike but the odd flick off the hip and a straight six off Adil Rashid, who bowled another fine spell, allowed Australia to advance. Then both Finch and the dangerous Marcus Stoinis departed in consecutive overs.

Glenn Maxwell, Ashton Agar and Pat Cummins scurried to complete the recovery. Archer's final over, which yielded 18 runs, was not as good as his first one. Nonetheless, there was a welcome buoyancy to his performance as there was to England's display in general. Genuine pace plus beguiling wrist spin must have provided a fine spectacle for the enlarged TV audience.



▲ *Dawid Malan made 42 from 32 balls in a stand of 87 with Jos Buttler*

England's response was measured rather than explosive. Finch took the precaution of giving Mitchell Starc and Cummins five of the six powerplay overs to enhance his chances of keeping control. Jonny Bairstow departed in an unusual fashion, which often happens to batsmen short of runs. He tried a pull against Starc and missed the ball by a considerable margin but as he completed the shot his bat flicked the top of the stumps. In the tell-tale era of flashing stumps and bails there could be no escape for Bairstow: hit wicket, bowled Starc.

Now England's form batsmen united. Buttler has long been a reassuring presence against a white ball but in the space of only 15 matches Dawid Malan, drawing on his long experience in the T20 Blast for Middlesex and in the Pakistan Super League, increas-

◀ *The England captain, Eoin Morgan, runs out Australia's Steve Smith for 10 with a direct hit from mid-on*

PAUL CHILDS/NMC POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Scoreboard

Ageas Bowl England beat Australia by six wickets.

Australia	Balls	4s	6s
DA Warner c Buttler b Archer **0**	3	0	0
***AJ Finch** b Jordan **40**	33	4	2
†AT Carey c Buttler b Wood **2**	7	0	0
SPD Smith run out (Morgan) **10**	7	1	1
MP Stoinis c Malan b Rashid **35**	26	2	2
GJ Maxwell c Buttler b Jordan **26**	18	1	1
AC Agar run out (Archer) **23**	20	2	0
PJ Cummins not out **13**	5	1	1
MA Starc not out **2**	1	0	0
Extras (lb2, w4) **6**			
Total (for 7, 20 overs) **157**			

Fall 0, 3, 30, 79, 89, 132, 155.

Did not bat A Zampa, KW Richardson.

Bowling Archer 4-0-32-1; Wood 4-0-25-1; Curran 3-0-25-0; Rashid 4-0-25-1; Jordan 4-0-40-2; Moeen Ali 1-0-8-0.

England	Balls	4s	6s
†JC Buttler not out **77**	54	8	2
JM Bairstow hit wicket b Starc **9**	11	2	0
DJ Malan c Stoinis b Agar **42**	32	7	0
T Banton c Cummins b Agar **2**	4	0	0
***EJG Morgan** c Maxwell b Zampa **7**	6	1	0
Moeen Ali not out **13**	6	1	1
Extras (lb5, w3) **8**			
Total (for 4, 18.5 overs) **158**			

Fall 19, 106, 122, 135.

Did not bat CJ Jordan, TK Curran, JC Archer, MA Wood, AU Rashid.

Bowling Starc 4-0-25-1; Cummins 3-0-24-0; Richardson 2-0-19-0; Maxwell 2-0-16-0; Zampa 3.5-0-42-1; Agar 4-0-27-2.

Toss Australia elected to bat.

Umpires M Burns and DJ Millns.

ingly prompts confidence. He appears to take his time; like all the best players he tries to minimise risk and yet his strike rate hovers around 150 in international T20 cricket. He did not go that fast yesterday but he did not need to.

Initially Malan outpaced Buttler as the pair added 87. Then Malan's pull-drive against Agar failed to clear Stoinis on the deep mid-wicket boundary. One of several virtues of the Ageas Bowl is that there are good sized boundaries so the number of mis-hit sixes, an injustice in modern T20, is reduced.

By now Buttler was in full flow conjuring a boundary whenever necessary; it might come from a reverse sweep or an orthodox back-foot drive that threaded through a packed off-side field. However it was no longer so simple at the other end. It transpired that England needed 37 from 30 balls with eight wickets remaining, a similar equation to the one that was too much for Australia on Friday night.

Tom Banton, clearly less comfortable down the order, holed out off Zampa; Morgan sliced a drive to cover. But Moeen eased any worries by hitting Zampa for six and four before Buttler polished it off in the grand manner.

In numbers

55.78
Jos Buttler's batting average *for England across all formats since international cricket resumed in July*

147.8
Dawid Malan's strike rate *in 15 T20 internationals since making his debut against South Africa in 2017*

Tour de France

Impressive Roglic takes the shirt off Yates's back

Jumbo-Visma rider assumes the overall race lead on a perfect day for Slovenia

Jeremy Whittle

Adam Yates lost his grip on the yellow jersey as Slovenian cyclists swept the board in the second Pyrenean stage of this year's Tour de France, with Primoz Roglic taking the overall lead and a 21-year-old Tour debutant, Tadej Pogacar winning the 153km ninth stage of the race to Laruns in the Pyrenees.

UAE Emirates' Pogacar, who won three stages and finished third overall in last year's Vuelta a España, is one of the hottest young talents in cycling and Roglic acknowledged that his compatriot now poses a real threat. "Definitely yes - he is really strong at the moment but it's still just the first nine days and a lot of things will happen before arriving in Paris," the Jumbo-Visma leader said.

Pogacar said: "I wanted to gain as much time as I could on GC and I knew that a stage win was worth 10 seconds, so I just went full-gas sprinting."

Their elation contrasted with the deflation of Yates after Mitchelton-Scott's overnight race leader was distanced by Pogacar's accelerations on the steepest sections of the final climb, the Col de la Marie Blanque.

A downcast Yates added that while his legs felt as strong as they had on Saturday's first Pyrenean stage, the pace into Laruns had been even faster. "It is what it is," he shrugged. "There are stages in the last week that suit me

▲ *Tadej Pogacar celebrates in Laruns after his first Tour de France stage win*

quite well. It was a big honour riding in yellow, so it was fun while it lasted."

Yates added: "I did my best. I knew coming into the race I wasn't 100%, and I gave everything I could to hang on. I think we can be proud of what we did and can freshen up now with the rest day and go after some stages."

But the defending champion, Egan Bernal of Ineos Grenadiers, showed that he is moving closer to his best form, as he finished fourth on the stage and climbed into second place in the overall standings.

Pogacar had taken note. "He looked better today," he said of Bernal. "He was really strong in the [final] climb. I think this Tour will be even more interesting in the next weeks."

Pogacar hinted too that he may have more attacks in store. "If you don't attack you can't gain time," he said. "I needed some time back so sometimes you just need to go full gas, and Jumbo are really strong, so you need to be careful when you attack. But the game for the GC has only just started."

Yet it is Roglic who remains, as predicted before the race started, the man to beat. "We deserve this," he said of his yellow jersey. "It's proof that we're doing a lot of the right work and it's a big achievement for everyone working for the team. But the general classification is always a fight for every second and a lot will happen before Paris."

Rain and mist swept over the first climbs of the stage and it took almost 50km of attacks before the breakaway took shape. Remarkably, despite his dramatic collapse on Saturday's stage, Thibaut Pinot was in the thick of them, but the Groupama-FDJ rider's resurgence was short-lived and the Frenchman once again slid backwards on the Col de la Hourcère.

Ahead, Marc Hirschi (Team Sunweb) moved clear and led by over four minutes as he sped towards the final climb of the Col de la Marie Blanque. The Swiss rider, pipped to the line by Julian Alaphilippe of Deceuninck-Quick-Step on day two, looked set to win his first Tour stage as he entered the final 25km, but the double-digit percentages of the Marie Blanque seemed to knock the stuffing out of him.

A series of accelerations from Pogacar put Yates into trouble, with a quintet of riders - Pogacar, Roglic, Bernal, Mikel Landa (Bahrain McLaren) and Richie Porte (Trek Segafredo) - moving clear in pursuit of Hirschi on the steep haul to the summit.

A touch of wheels as they crested the top of the climb almost took down both Pogacar and Roglic but, after a flying descent, Roglic assumed the status of race leader and Pogacar snatched his first stage win in the Tour. The convoy now heads north, past Bordeaux and on to La Rochelle in the Charente-Maritime, for the first rest day in this year's race.

Results and standings

Stage nine (Pau-Laruns; 154km) **1** T Pogacar (Svn) Emirates 3hr 55min 17sec; **2** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma; **3** M Hirschi (Swi) Sunweb; **4** E Bernal (Col) Ineos Grenadiers; **5** M Landa (Sp) Bahrain McLaren all same time; **6** B Mollema (Neth) Trek-Segafredo +0:11sec; **7** G Martin (Fr) Cofidis; **8** R Bardet (Fra) AG2R La Mondiale; **9** R Porte (Aus) Trek-Segafredo; **10** R Uran (Col) EF all same time

Overall standings: **1** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma 38hr 40min 01sec; **2** E Bernal (Col) Ineos Grenadiers +0:21sec; 3 G Martin (Fr) Cofidis +0:28; **4** R Bardet (Fr) AG2R la Mondiale +0:30; **5** N Quintana (Col) Arkea-Samsic +0:32; **6** R Uran (Col) EF s/t; **7** T Pogacar (Svn) Emirates +0:44; **8** A Yates (GB) Mitchelton-Scott +1:02; **9** M Ángel López (Col) Astana +1:15; **10** M Landa (Sp) Bahrain McLaren +1:42

▼ *The peloton winds its way through the second Pyrenean mountain stage*

ANNE-CHRISTINE POUJOULAT/AFP VIA GETTY

In the pits
Mercedes error costs Hamilton and hands Gasly his first victory
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Brutal Buttler
Australia hit for six as England claim victory in T20 series
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Tough talking
Southgate gives warning on discipline after Walker red
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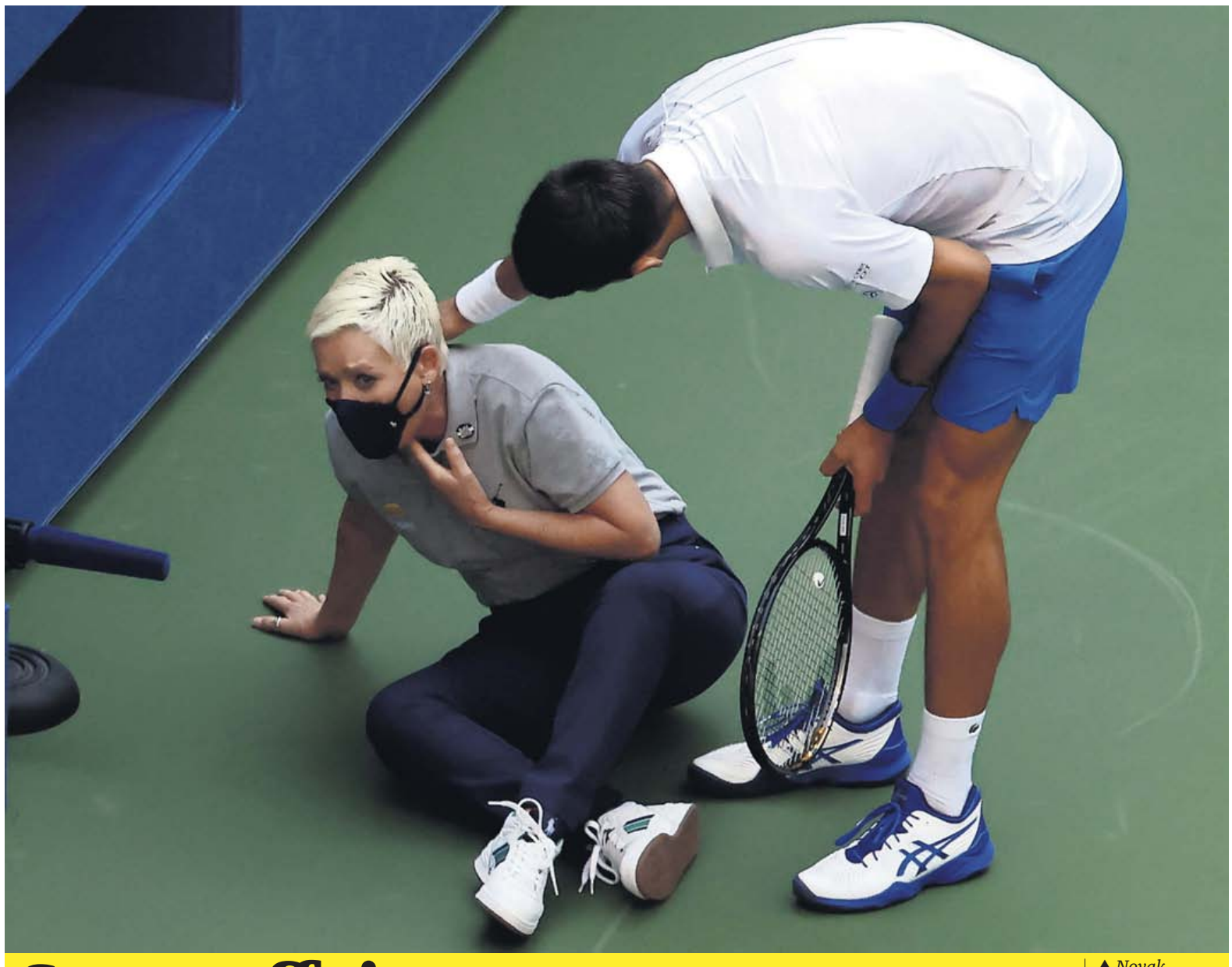
Sport



Sorry affair
Djokovic thrown out of US Open after stray ball strikes line judge

▲ *Novak Djokovic tries to comfort a line judge who was struck in the throat by a ball he hit away in frustration after losing his serve* JASON SZENES/EPA

Kevin Mitchell

Novak Djokovic was thrown out of the US Open after accidentally hitting a woman line judge with a ball towards the end of the first set of his match against the Spaniard Pablo Carreño Busta, then was widely criticised for immediately leaving Flushing Meadows.

The world No 1 had to forfeit the $250,000 he was due for reaching the fourth round, "in addition to any or all fines levied," according to the United Tennis Association, as well as losing all his ranking points.

▲ *Pablo Carreño Busta now has a victory over Novak Djokovic to his name*

The incident is a significant blow to Djokovic's standing in tennis, especially as he was challenging the establishment by forming a rebel players' association that has split the sport.

Djokovic walked from the court and shortly afterwards was seen leaving in his car and heading for his rented home. Word reached officials that he would not be returning to offer an explanation. It was not a good look.

Tim Henman, who was disqualified for a similar incident at Wimbledon in 1995 when he accidentally struck a ballgirl, said Djokovic was wrong to leave. "He should have faced up to it and apologised and accept he made a mistake. But by in essence running away from it, it's just going to go on even longer.

"We wouldn't want to see the best player in the world go out of the tournament in these circumstances but you have to be responsible for your actions on the court."

The former British No 1 Greg Rusedski agreed. "He would know the rules," he said. "At 33 years of age you know what the situation is and what's going to happen. I feel bad for him in one respect, because he's lost his opportunity to win his 18th major. He'll be absolutely devastated, one for the lines woman he accidentally injured, as well losing out trying to win another

A brilliant villain
What now for Djokovic after his latest blow in a year to forget?
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County game abandoned after positive Covid result

Tanya Aldred

English professional cricket suffered its first Covid-19 abandonment since the resumption when stumps were pulled at the Bob Willis Trophy match between Northamptonshire and Gloucestershire just after lunch.

The decision was made because a member of the Northants squad, not playing at Bristol but self-isolating at home after starting to feel ill on Thursday, received a positive test at 11.30 am yesterday morning. Last Tuesday he had been in contact with two members of the team who had travelled to Bristol.

Officials took the decision to call the match off after consultation between both clubs and the England and Wales Cricket Board. A statement released on the Gloucestershire website read: "Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire and the ECB are unified in the belief that player welfare is paramount and that no risks should be taken with the health and safety of the players, officials and administrators involved in this match."

Neither team had a chance of qualifying for the Bob Willis Trophy final due to be played at Lord's later this month, and with the match abandoned as a draw, Northants were awarded 10 points and Gloucestershire eight.

The two teams, first and second in the T20 Central Group, are due to meet in a T20 Blast game on Friday afternoon at Wantage Road - a decision on whether or not it will go ahead will be made by the ECB in the next 24 hours once it has tracked the movements of the players. Much will depend on how interlinked the white-ball and red-ball squads of both sides are, with Northants having largely separate XIs for the two competitions. No other counties are believed to be affected.

Strict guidelines were drawn up by the ECB to enable cricket to take place this summer, after demonisation of the cricket ball by Boris Johnson as "a vector of disease". Players must take regular sanitisation breaks every six overs and are banned from wetting the ball with saliva. Players are forbidden from sharing hats or jumpers and those at all levels must also field their own balls, which has led to the bizarre sight of England players crawling under bucket seats in empty stadiums to look for deliveries slammed into the stands.

Bob Willis Trophy roundup *Page 35 →*

“I spent a long time being this macho man

The Repair Shop’s **Jay Blades** on strength, weakness, racism – and love

The Guardian

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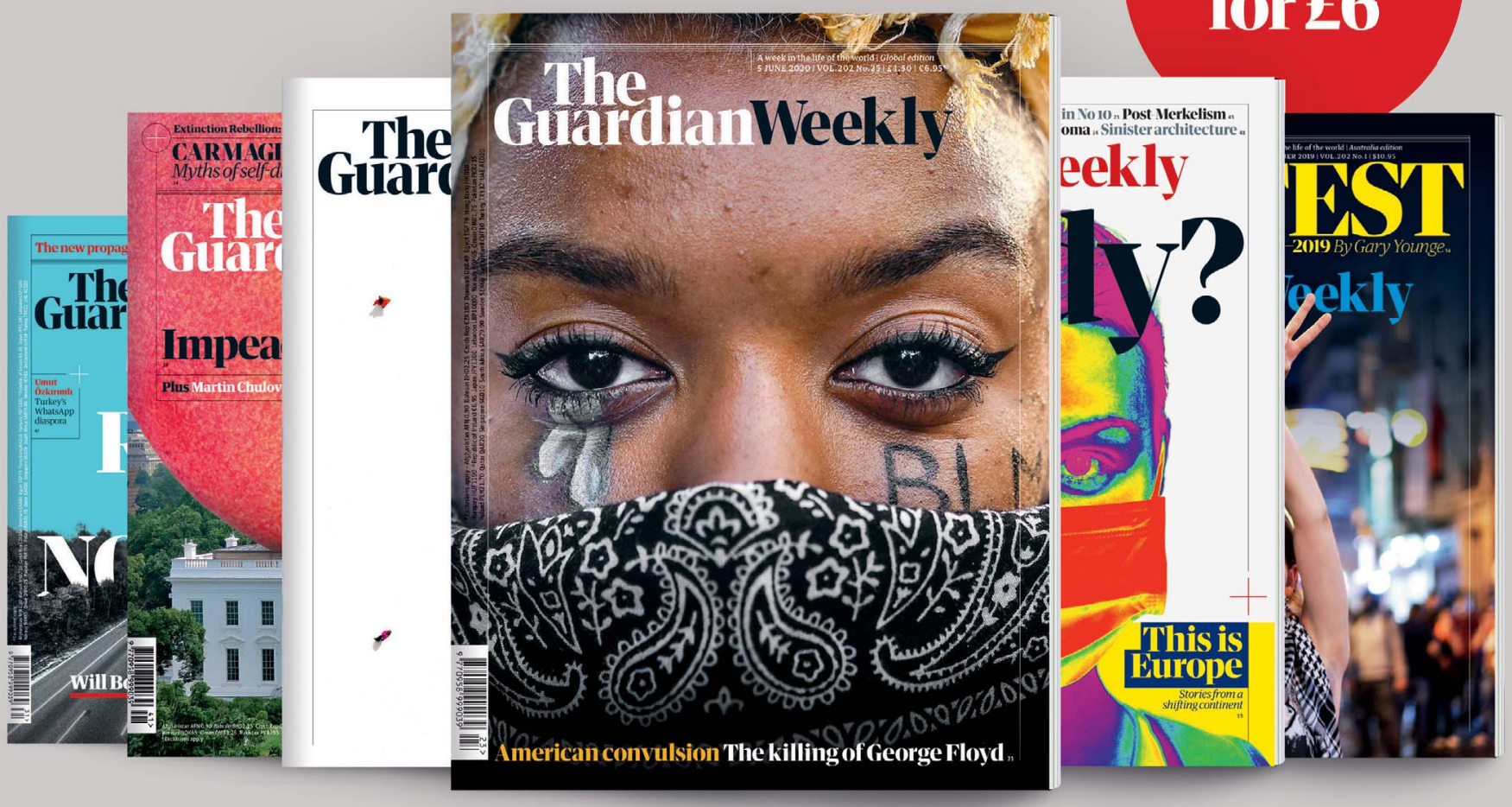

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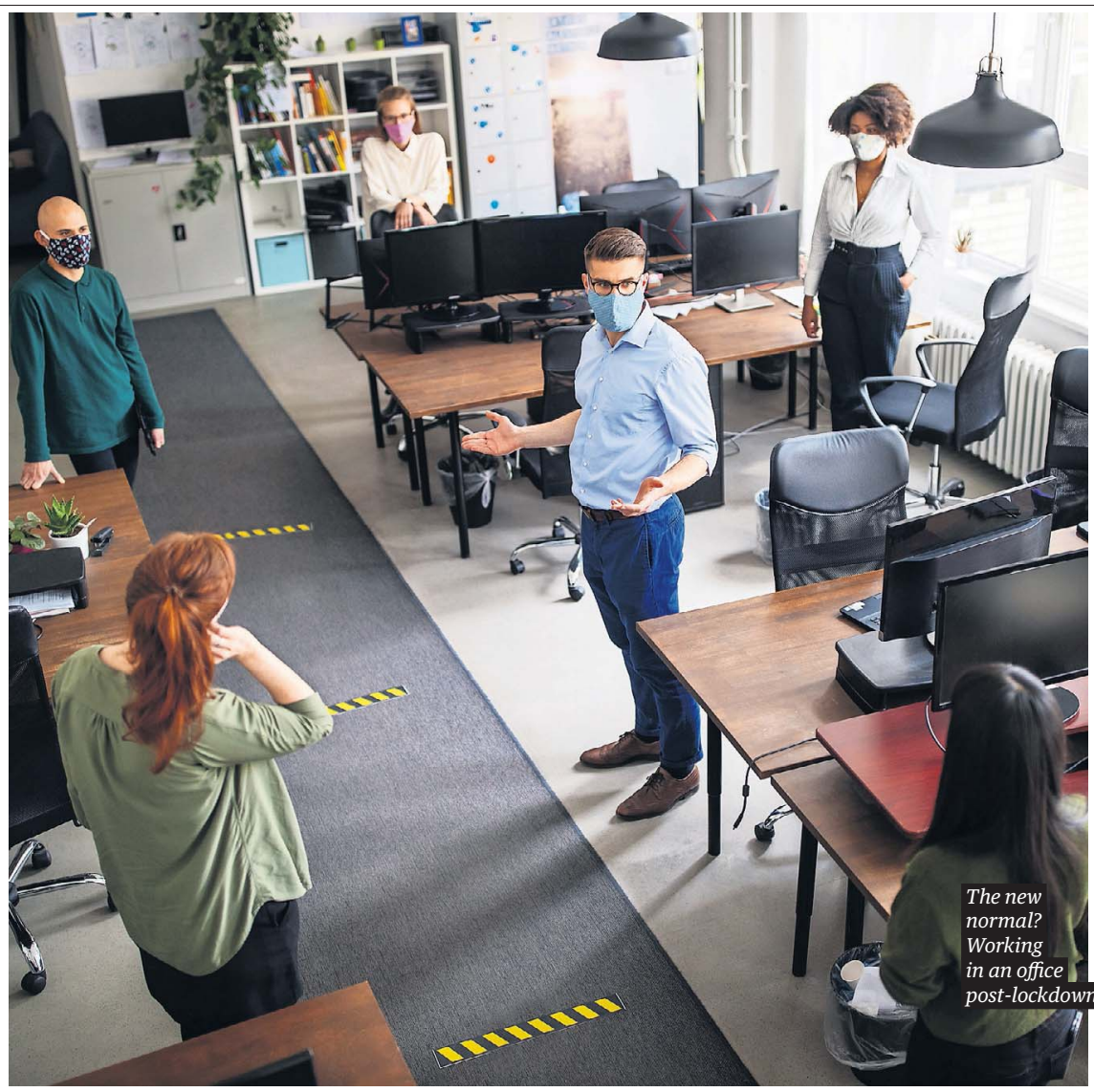
I miss the office – even though it's decades since I worked in one



The new normal? Working in an office post-lockdown

By Zoe Williams

'Hearing an alarm. Putting on a tie. Carrying a handbag. Receptionists." You may have seen this advert for Dettol, dressed up as an ad for offices. It swiftly ceases to make sense: "Caffeine-filled air. Taking a lift. Seeing your second family." You what now? Air filled with what? Second who? "Watercooler conversations. Proper bants." (Someone should write a thesis on why the word "bants" doesn't belong in the mouth of any but the very first person to say it.) "CCing. BCCing. Accidentally replying-all," the advert continues, seemingly unaware that you can do all three of those things from home.

I saw this ad in the very busy London underground interchange station of Euston; it could only have been preaching louder to the choir if it had been an ad for using public transport. But you get the point, right? Dettol wants you back at work, just as the government wants you back at work. Go back to work.

I didn't work in an office in the first place. I haven't had a desk since the 90s, which was a time-warp for workplaces, more like the 30s: people would arrive, stay long enough to put their coat on a chair and then go to the pub.

For at least the first eight weeks of this pandemic, the worst (and, indeed, only negatively different) thing about working from home was all the other people who were in my house, treating it like their own, which is to say my family. But over time I came to realise that I relied on office life, too, the way you might follow a stoner's smoke around a park to relieve stress, or just for a nostalgic kick.

I used to love the intoxicating delight of knowing, when I phoned someone in the office, that they were sitting next to someone to whom I also wanted to speak. I loved visiting an office, perambulating around, disturbing the peace. God knows the last thing I want is to agree with an advert, but I loved receptionists, especially the ones who looked a bit bored and could be diverted by the most trifling remark. I loved the weird conventions of fellowship that would develop, particularly around food, everyone crowding round chocolate like soldiers in trenches. I loved the whispered, fevered conversations about people who were annoying. "Hysterical bitching", psychoanalysts call it – powerful emotions going absolutely nowhere and then ending, like a whirling waltzer. I loved that it was always someone's birthday.

When the pandemic started, responses were codified by class: the rich got clean out of town, to the country retreats they weren't supposed to visit, or the spare homes on their parents' grounds just outside, say, Durham; the middle classes huddled in their urban homes, faux-self-flagellating about how lucky they were to have a garden; and poor people kept going to work, because it turned out what they did was vitally important.

As we emerge from lockdown, or fretful politicians try to coax us back, class is sidelined and temperament comes to the fore. It pleases introverts to go around saying things such as: "There is no back-to-normal – nothing will ever be the same again." When they think their point hasn't quite landed, they up the ante: "You lot are dreaming! Wait for the second wave!"

> **Office life versus home life is like reading a novel v reading the small print on a bottle of bleach**

Extroverts, meanwhile, think that if they start behaving resolutely as though it is 2022 already, the world will simply catch up with them. We are in the pub, we are eating out to help out, but what we really want is something anhedonic, something that won't get us accused of irresponsibility, something packed with people, all of whom we could legitimately approach and talk to – something, in short, a bit like work.

Introverts are always pondering the specific thing that extroverts love about company. Is it the intimacy? Is it the familiarity? The jokes? It is none of those things. It is the unpredictability. Sure, on a lot of days, nothing will happen. On other days, the thing that happens is untoward and life would have been better if it hadn't. But if every person brings to work not only their tie and/or handbag, but also a limitless number of fresh variables, chances are that things will happen. Incidents might extend into strings of related events, going on for weeks. At home, nothing happens except post and breakages. Office life versus home life is the difference between reading a novel and reading the small print on a bottle of bleach because you got locked in a toilet.

I would absolutely love to get back to the office, in other words. I would go as far as to consider getting a job.

Morrissey and Greer, the sitcom stars the BBC is crying out for

The new director-general of the BBC, Tim Davie, has voiced his determination to show more rightwing comedy and less leftwing comedy. Many are concerned, on account of the fact that there *are* no rightwing comedians worthy of the name.

It's an unusual job, isn't it? You could be a doctor and fail to heal a person, but, hey, you would be trained; you would still be a doctor. A comedian, contrariwise, needs to get a laugh, or it isn't comedy. It's a minimum two-person job. Ideally, you want tons of people, all laughing, a yardstick of inclusivity. It is no job for the rugged individualist, the dedicated Ayn Rand-reader.

This is the kindest explanation for the non-existence of rightwing comedy, and I'm sticking with it.

However, the announcement could not have come at a better time for my sitcom idea. So there's this house. It's a bit like The Young Ones, except the flatmates are all people who were previously darlings of the liberal left who, for one reason or another, veered wildly in the other direction. When it starts, it's just Germaine Greer and Morrissey, and they get on OK, but he hates the word "menopause" so she says it constantly, and they fall out over the ins and outs of veganism.

It's actually a three-bedroom house, so they interview John Cleese, but he is just insufferable from every political and human angle. Instead, Kate Hoey moves in, which is fine up to a point, except that she never does any washing up, which gets right on Germaine's wick, and the house descends into entropy and squalor – OK, that bit is heavily Young Ones-influenced – as they walk the emotional tightrope of who has and has not been invited on to an LBC panel that week, and whether the invitation related to a personal project, or they were just a representative from Planet Wow Do You Really Think That, Or Are You Just Beefing With the Liberal Elite?

Look, nobody said it would be laugh-out-loud. Sitcoms have different rules.

Inspiration ... The Young Ones

COVER: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN. PHOTOGRAPH: LUIS ALVAREZ/GETTY IMAGES (POSED BY MODELS)

G2 The Guardian
Monday 7 September 2020

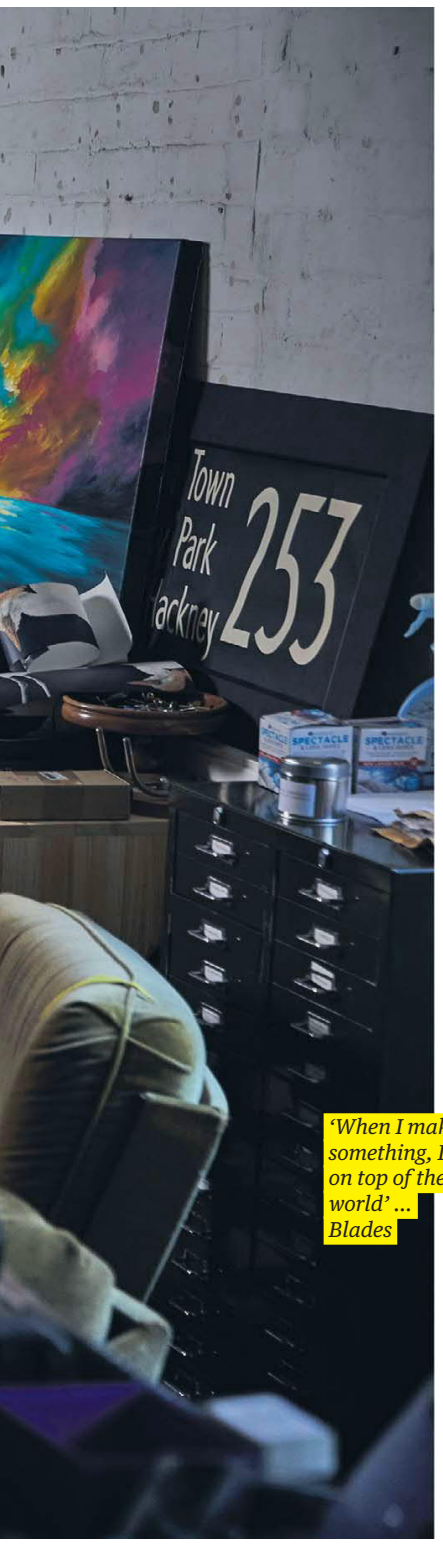
‘If we’re broken, we need to know how to fix ourselves’

Restoring strangers’ possessions has made Jay Blades a star. But, he tells **Emine Saner**, nothing he does on The Repair Shop compares to how he overcame a breakdown, racism and police brutality

The Repair Shop is about many things. People bring items to its picturesque thatched workshop to be brought back to life in front of the BBC show’s cameras. It’s about the skill and meticulousness of the restorers’ work, a chance to see the inner workings of an object, an echo of a time when we fixed things instead of buying new. One less thing destined for landfill.

Mostly, says Jay Blades, The Repair Shop’s presenter, without a hint of sentimentality, it’s “about love”. It’s about loss and memory and how objects once cherished by loved ones can carry huge weight for those left behind. Some of the grief is still raw and recent. It’s also about new beginnings, he says. “How if something’s broken, you can put it back together. And sometimes that’s quite a metaphor for us in life – that if we’re broken, we need to know how we can fix ourselves.” Blades knows a lot about that.

The show has become a phenomenon (it pulls in 6.5 million viewers, and new episodes start this week), for all those reasons. Has its success surprised him? “I kind of knew from the beginning that it was something special,” he says. Clocks tick again, teddy bears are resuscitated, great-grandparents’ treasures are stripped of decades of paint, grime and benign neglect, and restored to glory. “Some objects that come in, you might think: ‘What is that?’ But when you hear the story behind them, the emotion, you cannot help but be part of it.”



'When I make something, I feel on top of the world' ... Blades

PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN

During the pandemic, there has been something especially comforting in The Repair Shop's gentle pace and ethos of helping. Unlike, say, The Antiques Roadshow, there is never a monetary value associated with the objects. They are, says Blades, "so entrenched with someone from their family, how could you put a price on that?"

While many of us have become enamoured of internet shopping, others have started to buy less as a result of the pandemic. Will that last? Blades, although by nature optimistic - his positive energy crackles down the phone line - isn't sure. "We've been programmed to obtain things. But shows like The Repair Shop or Money for Nothing [his other BBC show, about upcycling] get people more aware of what they're doing to continue this consumerist, throwaway society."

The fairly recent shift towards "fast furniture" - cheap, disposable items - is "unbelievable" to him. Blades is hopeful that, with people at home more and paying more attention to their interiors, they will look at how to reuse items. "That trend has been really refreshing to see," he says.

For Blades, who also runs a furniture restoring business, repairing things comes with its own reward. "The feelgood factor that you get when you fix something, or you redesign a chair and put a different fabric on it, it's almost as if you've got this virtual pat on your back." School, for him, wasn't the "best experience. I had teachers telling me I wouldn't amount to anything. But when I make something, I feel on top of the world."

Blades only discovered making and restoring things in his 30s (he is now 50). He grew up in Hackney, east London, with his brother, brought up by their mother, who worked as a secretary; his father wasn't part of his life, and it remains that way, though Blades made brief contact with him when he was 21. (It was then he found out his father had fathered 25 half-siblings; he has been in touch with 12 of them.) Life on his council estate seemed sheltered and communal. "All the adults were classified as uncles and aunties, so they would look after anybody. They all knew my mum, and my mum knew their children. The estate was just like one big house."

It wasn't until he went to secondary school in another borough that he discovered racism. "I didn't understand the names at first, but I understood when someone punched me," he says. "From the first year, it was a constant battle between me and the racists. The level of racism was insane." There wasn't anyone he could speak to - it wasn't the sort of thing he talked about with his mother, and there was no way he would have gone to his teachers, he says. Instead, he fought back and was marked out as "disruptive". He was also dyslexic - when he eventually went to university at the age of 30, "they found out that I had the reading ability of an 11-year-old. My learning had stopped."

His dyslexia hadn't been picked up; instead he was put in a class with other "disruptive" boys, most of whom were black. He remembers physical violence from the teachers - being punched in the stomach, caned and beaten with a plimsoll. "I would say at least 80-90% of us were dyslexic, but none of us were told that we were. When I found out at university, the amount of support I got was unbelievable. I was, like, why did no one do this before?"

He knows why. "Institutionalised racism," he says. "There were ways that teachers dealt with young black men - and even to this day, we still have alarming statistics about the exclusion rate of young black men, and the criminalisation of young black men. And that's probably why it wasn't picked up: 'He's black, you can't teach him, he's ignorant, put him in that class.'"

As a teenager, Blades says he would be stopped and searched by the police "a lot". He says many young black men in the 80s would be familiar with his experience: "If you saw the police, you didn't know whether they were going to put you in the van, beat you up, arrest you for something that you hadn't done. It was a real them-and-us time. At one stage, I hated the police with a passion, because of how they treated me, how they treated my friends." He saw one friend sent to prison for a crime Blades says he didn't commit, and didn't know anyone in his community who would have called the police if they needed help. "I never remember any police officer being brought around our area to do good, to investigate a crime, to sort something out."

Several times, he says, he would be picked up by special patrol group vans. "They would beat me, and take me to another area, like Canning Town [also in east London], which was predominantly white and just throw me out. It wasn't a case of: 'Oh, where's the nearest bus stop?' It's, like, you're walking through some estates that don't like black people - and you're in their manor. So how do you get out of there? You've got no money, you're a bit disorientated, you could be bleeding." He was about 13 or 14, he says.

Blades watched the Black Lives Matter movement, and the global protests following the killing of George Floyd by police in the US, with a cautious hope that progress might pick up pace. When he was being racially abused at school and on the street, there was no support, he says. "The only support was from your community, and your community had no standing within society. So to see Black Lives Matter now; even to see me, a 6ft 3in black geezer, single parent, council estate, on the BBC ... I grew up watching the Black and White Minstrel show."

'It's about love' ... at work on The Repair Shop; (right) with the show's team

You didn't know if the police would beat you up and arrest you for something you hadn't done

But change is still slow. Last weekend, Michael Fuller, Britain's only ever black police chief constable, who led Kent police from 2004 to 2010, said the horror of Floyd's killing could happen in the UK . "I definitely agree with that," says Blades.

After spending his 20s working in factories and as a labourer, Blades went to Buckinghamshire New University to study criminology as a mature student. On graduating, he started a charity working with disadvantaged young people in Oxford, where he was commissioned by Thames Valley police to train officers and talk to young people "and basically to find out from them how they were being treated by police officers".

After funding ran out, he set up Out of the Dark, teaching young people how to restore and sell old furniture. It was about, he says, "getting them job-ready, and showing them that they could make something out of nothing, and then they could do the same with themselves". The Guardian made a short film about Out of the Dark in 2014, which brought Blades to the attention of TV producers who realised he would be a natural on screen. It looked as if his life was about to go in one direction; instead, it imploded. Funding for that charity dried up, his marriage to the mother of his daughter, whom he met at university, broke down (he also has two children from previous relationships), and he became homeless. "I didn't even know if I would see tomorrow," he says. "It was a really, really dark time."

He felt asking others for help would be an admission of weakness. "For years, I'd run community groups. I was the person people would come to when their children were arrested, something was going on at school, there were two gangs fighting: 'Call Jay, he'll sort it out.' I knew I needed support, but I couldn't ask. I was scared because it would make me seem as if I was vulnerable, that I was not a 'man'."

Blades moved into a cheap hotel, and two police officers and two nurses came to see him. He says he was "so numb" he didn't realise what was going on until one of the nurses said she didn't think he needed to be sectioned - admitted to a psychiatric unit. "When I heard the word 'section', I was like: 'Shit, why are you here? What is this all about?' They had interviewed me for almost an hour but I woke up at that word." They told him they'd been led to believe that he might cause harm to himself.

When they left, there was another knock at the door, and a friend, Gerald Bailey - called by Blade's ex-wife - was there. "I sat in his car, started talking, and the next thing you know I was crying. It was really refreshing to be crying in front of a man, and a man not taking the piss. And he just took me under his wing."

Blades stayed with him for a couple of weeks, then went to live with Bailey's mother. "That was probably the best thing ever, because his mum and stepdad started nurturing me, in the old Caribbean style. They would cook me food, and I would look after them and take them to where they wanted to go. There was a Caribbean community centre that I would go to, and I'd be surrounded by the elders, watching them play dominoes, listening to stories. It fed my soul, and that's what brought me back. When you have a community that supports you in that way, it gives you that strength to say: 'I can do this.'"

Around the same time, his TV career was taking off. After appearing on Kirstie Allsopp's craft show, he went on to co-present the BBC's Money For Nothing. He is now settled in Wolverhampton with his partner, Christine, who works in marketing.

One of The Repair Shop's many delights is that it's one of the few places on factual television where men show emotion. "We still have those ideas that men don't do that," says Blades. "In the show, the thing that always gets to me is when men show emotion for someone they love. I lived for quite a long time being this macho man, and not really embracing that emotional side. You don't know how someone's going to take it, if they're going to take the mickey out of you. Because not many men do it, it's a lonely experience when you do."

The show, he says, "allows men to be emotional and in tune with their feelings and display it to millions of people". Scrape away those layers of gentle charm, and it might just be the most radical thing on television.

The Repair Shop will air weekdays from Monday 7 September at 4.30pm on BBC One. The episodes are also available on iPlayer.

In the UK, Samaritans can be contacted on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org. You can contact the mental health charity Mind by calling 0300 123 3393 or visiting mind.org.uk

‘I wouldn’t have quit without

While lockdown and furlough made it easy for people to drink to excess at home, for some it was the perfect time to address their alcohol problem. **Sirin Kale** reports

There was nothing extraordinary about the weekend that Charlotte Davies decided to stop drinking. The 47-year-old office manager, from the Berkshire village of Warfield, watched TV with her husband. They cooked. On the Saturday evening, Davies drank two bottles of red wine. Fetching the wine from the garage, where she stores it, she realised with dismay that the 36 bottles she had ordered online had almost gone. She made a mental note to order more.

On Sunday, her hangover was “horrendous”. “I was really ill, I had such a headache and I felt incredibly depressed,” she says. She held out for as long as she could, before cracking at about 5.30pm, and drinking another bottle of red wine. That day, Sunday 14 June, was the last on which Davies would drink alcohol. Enough.

It was not that that day was a particular low: there had been plenty of others. There was that wedding, last year, when Davies had been lurching all over the dance floor. There were photos on Facebook the next day and, mortified, Davies begged the guest to take them down. Then there was that time in Manchester when she went to watch the marathon with friends. As she left the restaurant, drunk, she fell. She still has the scar on her arm.

What changed for Davies was not a particularly bad hangover, or a wince-inducing social faux pas. It was Covid. “I don’t know if I would have quit without Covid,” she says. After she was furloughed, on 1 April, she says: “It was like, all bets are off. When you have a 9 to 5, you can’t drink, because you have to work. But with that taken away, there was nothing stopping me.” Left to her own devices, Davies realised that, for years, her drinking had been out of control. “What Covid did was give me free rein to let me drink as much as I wanted,” she says, “but it also made me stop. It was a wakeup call.”

It has not been easy. “I love red wine,” she says simply. “I miss it.” Alongside the temptation has been the physical withdrawal. “Because alcohol has so much sugar in it,” she says, “when you stop drinking, you go into withdrawal. I was getting intense headaches and cravings for sweet things, plus I was extremely tired.” And then there was the psychological impact. “I drank to numb the pain in my life,” she says. “Three weeks in, I couldn’t stop crying.” But Davies is adamant that she will stay alcohol-free. “I could see where my path was heading. My relationship with my husband was suffering. The future I could see was just awful. And the only person who could change that was me.”

Davies is not alone. A July poll from the charity Alcohol Change UK found that of the 1,647 people in the survey who had drunk alcohol at some point in their lives, 37% had attempted to manage their alcohol intake during lockdown, by reducing the amount of alcohol they purchased, seeking support from their GP or having alcohol-free days. There was a 355% increase in traffic to the “Get help now” section of Alcohol Change UK’s website in the first three weeks of lockdown, compared with the same period a year previously. For the three months between 23 March and 23 June, traffic to the Alcohol Change UK website increased by 60%.

Although supermarket shelves were stripped of alcohol in the early weeks of lockdown, data from Nielsen shows that consumers drank 1.3bn litres of alcohol from 23 March to 11 July, down from the 2bn litres drunk in the same period last year. “While there is a perception that lockdown has been a boozy one, and that we’re consuming more alcohol

> **Covid gave me free rein to drink as much as I wanted, but it also made me stop**

‘Being alcohol-free is lovely’ … Charlotte Davies

Covid'

than normal, this is far from the case," an analyst told the Retail Times.

"As always with drinking in this country, the picture is complicated," says Andrew Misell of Alcohol Change UK. "Some people used the pandemic as an opportunity to cut back on their drinking, perhaps because it made them aware of the need to protect their health, or they realised they were drinking too much before." But for others, lockdown posed an opportunity to get obliterated on alcohol from the comfort of their own homes. "People were bored, anxious, they were worried about their jobs," says Misell. "So they drank more."

The lockdown meant people who already had a problematic relationship with alcohol found it easier to stumble into full-blown alcoholism. Paul, who is in his 30s, lives alone in Glasgow. He was furloughed from his job in sports in May and much of the period that followed is a blur, he says. "As soon as I opened my eyes in the morning, I would open the fridge, take out some beer or wine and start drinking." He spent £7,000 – his entire savings – on alcohol, and got into debt. He stopped paying his rent and council tax. One evening, he invited some people, whom he hardly knew, back to his flat for a drinking session. His neighbours called the police. He had to go to court, and was fined. "Everything spiralled out of control," he says.

Paul had been drinking too much for years: he would go for drinks every night after work, and weekends were binges that lasted from Friday to Sunday. Sometimes, he would go into work without having been to bed the night before. "Alcohol was helping me to block out and numb a lot of things I should have been dealing with," he says, explaining that he recently came out of a longterm relationship that ended badly.

Paul realised that he would be likely to lose his job and his home if he did not get things under control. "Lockdown kind of multiplied the problem," he says, "but it helped me to realise it. I saw that everything was going to shit." He is now on a payment plan to pay off his debts, and has stopped drinking on his own, although he would not be averse to accessing support from his GP if he felt he was slipping back into old habits. "I haven't touched it at all. I've not actually found it too hard," he says. "I can concentrate on things. The only drawback is that I hadn't smoked for years, and now I'm smoking 20 cigarettes a day." He sighs. "That's the next thing to quit."

When I speak to Jamie Klingler, who lives in London and runs an events company, it is the day after her 42nd birthday. For the first time in her adult life she hasn't woken up post-birthday to a hangover, a barrage of texts from concerned friends or her possessions missing. "Before all this started," says Klingler of Covid, "I would say that I was an alcoholic, but hadn't addressed it."

Klingler drank a bottle or two of wine every night, usually while out socialising. Friends attempted to talk to her about her drinking, but she shut down these conversations, and her relationships suffered as a result. "Honestly," she says, "the fact that my friends stuck around at all is pretty remarkable." When her mother died of cancer two years ago, the drinking kicked up a notch. "I was the drunk girl crying in the corner. I was grieving very loudly, and chaotically."

When lockdown hit, Klingler ordered three 10-litre boxes of rosé wine. "I was hammered for the first month," she says. And then she fell ill: she is not sure if it was Covid. "I thought: 'What am I doing? I need to get myself together,'" she says. She spoke to a family friend, a doctor, who advised her to quit drinking, before it was too late. "He said: 'If you start drinking again, your body won't bounce back. Your liver won't regenerate. It will kill you.'" She has found support in a WhatsApp group of sober and sober-curious people in her industry called Spill (Sober Party Industry Lads and Ladies), as well as books including The Unexpected Joy of Being Sober, by Catherine Gray.

'I was the drunk girl crying in a corner' ... Jamie Klingler

There's this idea that you're only an alcoholic if you wake up and shake until you have a drink

The fear of falling victim to a life-threatening virus was enough to shock many people into healthier behaviour, says Fiona Measham, a professor of criminology at the University of Liverpool. "People saw the death rate going up every day, and were confronted with their own mortality," she says. "They'd see people being put on ventilators, and think, if I don't take my health seriously, it could be a matter of life and death."

When I ask Peter, an airport worker in his 50s from Essex, why he gave up drink during lockdown, he replies simply: "For health." He says: "Drinking a bottle of wine a day takes years off your life. I'd rather be around a bit longer, for my children." Peter works shifts – his days off were always spent drinking. During lockdown, he was furloughed, so he started drinking a bottle of wine a day, plus beer. He says he was waking up every morning feeling annoyed with himself. "It wasn't making me feel good."

So many of us sleepwalk through our days, attending to the business of living without thinking about how we are spending our lives. Covid gave many people the time to reflect on their relationship with alcohol. "You go to work and it consumes you," says Davies, "and then you get home and you're so tired, you don't think about things."

Peter realised booze had made him a bad parent, and argumentative: a few years ago, he had been banned from his local pub for punching a punter. "I didn't notice how much I was drinking before, because I was either pissed, or too busy to notice."

Covid also helped to expose our society's contradictory messaging around alcohol. Freed from the rituals that make binge drinking socially acceptable – the parties, pub gatherings and events that add a gloss of respectability to behaviour that might otherwise be stigmatised – people were forced to acknowledge that their drinking had been out of control for years, even decades.

"People lost the rituals around drinking that they'd previously had," says Measham. "They couldn't stop off after work for drinks with friends or colleagues." Paul thinks that he would have continued down the path he was on for years had it not been for the pandemic. "Before, when I was drinking badly, it was always in pubs and with friends, so you didn't think it was that bad. It was kind of acceptable."

In times of stress, boredom, fatigue, celebration and despair, the British drink. Davies says: "Sometimes, I'd think: 'Am I drinking too much?' But then I'd think: 'I'm not an alcoholic. I have a nice home, a good job, a good social life.'" Peter says: "There's this narrative that you're only an alcoholic if you wake up in the morning and shake until you put a drink inside you. But it really isn't like that. There's a sliding scale of alcoholism, and it's about recognising where you are on it."

Misell tells me that affluent people tend to drink more: it is the only one of the major health behaviours (the others are smoking, diet and exercise), where the wealthy are unhealthier than those on low incomes. "There's a certain respectability to drinking," Misell explains, "particularly if you're drinking wine, or artisan gin."

Lockdown gave people the space to quit drinking, but now pubs are reopening, they may be tempted to resume into old habits. "My fear of missing out is really strong," says Klingler. "When you're outside and everyone's drinking rosé, it can be tempting." Davies says she has found support by using the online sobriety movement – she cites Club Soda, Team Sober UK and Sober Girl Society as favourites. "The support you get from other people is great," she says. "It's like being in a tribe. You really do need to find people who support you, because while your family and friends love you, they might not understand."

Dr Cyrus Abbasian, a psychiatrist and a specialist in alcohol addiction, is concerned that the newly sober may relapse. Mass unemployment on a scale not seen since the 1980s seems probable when the furlough scheme ends in October. "Economic decline is strongly correlated with alcohol misuse," says Abbasian. "As we come out of the furlough scheme, there will be a lot of financial pressures. Alcohol is cheap and accessible. The long-term consequences of this may be severe."

But Davies is optimistic. "I feel quite excited about the future," she says. "I am grateful for my life. Although Covid has been a terrible thing for the world, for me, it's been a good thing." It has been 80 days since Davies drank alcohol. Her garage, once stacked high with red wine, is full of soda water, elderflower cordial and lime. "Being alcohol-free is lovely," she says. "I haven't got that horrible inner voice saying, 'Go on, have one', or worrying that I don't have enough wine. I wake up early. I go for walks. I'm getting joy out of my life again. I feel very peaceful. Calm."

Some names have been changed

PHOTOGRAPHS: SARAH LEE/THE GUARDIAN; ANDREY POPOV/GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO (POSED BY MODEL)

‘When I became a parent, I’d cry at anything’

Jude Law is playing a troubled father trapped on a sinister island in a bold new drama. It unlocked his deepest parenting fears, he tells **Emine Saner** as she speaks to the star and the show’s creators. *Contains spoilers*

Osea, a small island off the coast of Britain reached by a causeway, is too unsettling a place to be charming but it is certainly intriguing. Its inhabitants add salt to bottled water to make it palatable. They also wear large fish heads and carry oversized scissors to “cut out” evil from children. Admittedly, they’re practising for a festival that will celebrate Osea’s ancient traditions. But the more you watch The Third Day, the more you imagine that this is what passes for everyday life there, at least according to this innovative new TV drama.

The Third Day – think The Wicker Man with a dash of David Lynch, reinvented for a prestige TV generation – has an impressive team behind it. The HBO/Sky series was created by the writer Dennis Kelly, who brought us the prescient flu-pandemic conspiracy drama Utopia and the gloriously grubby comedy Pulling; and by Felix Barrett, founder of UK theatre company Punchdrunk.

The Third Day kicks off with Summer, a three-part section that follows Sam, a troubled father played by Jude Law. He gets trapped on this quaint – but soon to become sinister – island. In Winter, the final section, Naomie Harris stars as Helen, a woman who takes her reluctant daughters to Osea for a holiday. But what marks the show out is the middle section, Autumn, which will be 12 hours, broadcast live.

It has been in the making for seven years. Law – speaking to me over Zoom, along with Barrett and Kelly – was involved almost from the start but was doubtful it would ever be finished. He was a big fan of Punchdrunk’s pioneering site-specific work. “It sounded extraordinary and challenging,” says Law. “But then the years passed, so I assumed it was never going to work.”

Barrett was first asked about creating work for TV around the time Punchdrunk were performing The Drowned Man, in which masked audience members explored a disused Royal Mail sorting office in London, where a Hollywood film studio had been recreated. He needed a writer who had worked in stage and screen, so he went to Kelly, who has written several plays and the musical adaptation of Matilda.

At first Kelly was cautious. “My playwriting side and my TV and screenwriting side are different. I don’t believe in mixing them up

‘There will be mistakes’ … Law, who will perform in one 12-hour section

My children all got lots of messages of love during the making of this series

‘Unrelenting’ … from left, Law, Paddy Considine, Emily Watson and Naomie Harris in The Third Day

PHOTOGRAPHS: FRANCO ORIGLIA/GETTY; OLLIE UPTON/SKY; JULIAN ABRAMS

Breathless theatre ... Punchdrunk's The Drowned Man

because you end up with really televisual plays, or theatrical TV." But he, too, had loved Punchdrunk's shows and thought it might just work.

The story they were interested in telling, says Kelly, "was about going to a place, finding it sort of idyllic, but then being trapped when you realise it's not". Barrett had heard about Osea, a privately owned island off the Essex coast. Previously home to a few bohemians, it is now uninhabited, though there are luxury holiday cottages and villas to rent, and it has been the site of exclusive parties.

Law's character, Sam, has a lot going on. (Warning: spoilers.) He's involved in something dubious concerning his business, but on this day he's also going through a ritual – one that concerns, we soon find out, the death of his child. A shocking event brings him to the island. Then the tide comes in, covering the causeway and leaving him stuck.

The decision not to entirely fictionalise the island was deliberate: it isn't renamed, and there is a reference to its former owner, Frederick Charrington, a 19th-century social reformer. That blurring of reality and fiction is a Punchdrunk trademark: their attention to detail in the worlds they conjure acts as a kind of trickery. Here, Barrett describes it as "an experiential magic hour" where you're not sure what is real. "You start to ask, 'Wait a second, does this actually happen on this island?' As soon as the audience have that seed of doubt, that's a rich place to be telling a story."

There's a fair bit of running around and a good few scary horror scenes. Sinister villagers are fended off, and Sam mines some painful thoughts as he seems to lose his grip on reality. It must have been, I suggest, a physically and emotionally demanding shoot. "I completely underestimated getting into Sam's skin," says Law with a smile. "I think messing with grief, really sticking your finger in and poking around at what grief is ..." He pauses. "The emotion is unrelenting for Sam."

To fully explore his character, did Law, who has several children, find himself imagining a similar fate for his own offspring? "It's a sort of muddy area," he says. "One doesn't sit dwelling on the loss of your own children, but you kind of poke around at what that might be. My children all got lots of messages during the making of this, telling them how much I loved them." He laughs. When he became a parent, he says, "I started crying at anything. Everything emotional immediately goes to my relationship with them – and the capacity of love and the capacity of loss and all of that."

Performing live isn't new to Law: he has always mixed theatre with his film and TV careers. But the 12-hour length of that middle episode poses a new challenge: "I've never done anything, or stayed in a character, for such a long period of time."

In the first episode, Punchdrunk created a just-the-right-side-of-theatrical pub scene (in which the landlords, incidentally, are played with wonderful weirdness by Emily Watson and Paddy Considine). "Felix would stand up and say, 'Two hours later' – and they would all advance into a more drunk state. It was like stepping into another world. I have a feeling the live episode's going to be like that – but for 12 hours." Kelly asks, teasingly, how long those takes were. "Four minutes," admits Law ruefully.

The pandemic almost scuppered the live performance and, given the endless Covid-19 developments, its fate is still not certain. The festival organised by the islanders, in which outsiders would be let in for the first time, went from huge numbers of visitors to 20, but they integrated that into the story. "We imagined that the community stopped letting people in," says Barrett.

There will be one camera capturing the day in a continuous shot. But, adds Barrett, "it's definitely not television – it's very much theatre, it's got the pace of theatre."

Barrett doesn't expect people to sit down and watch it for 12 hours. But, with a laugh, Kelly says that he does. Still, it does feel like the return of something communal, in an age when people stream shows whenever they want and most theatre productions have been shut down because of the pandemic.

"With this," says Law, "what's exciting is that it is happening live and there will be mistakes. There will be moments you maybe won't notice, or maybe you will." That's the thrill, agrees Barrett. "The power of theatre is that tension," he says. "You're in the hands of the gods. There's that moment when the performers breathe in, the audience breathe in and anything could happen."

Summer begins 15 September on Sky Atlantic and NOW TV. Autumn will be broadcast live on 3 October on Sky Arts.

Unflagging energy ... Mitchell in the video for New American Dream

This American carnage

The creator of Hedwig and the Angry Inch has crafted a 'platonic musical orgy' in which cannibals eat Donald Trump. **Andrew Male** meets John Cameron Mitchell

On the morning of 4 November, following his defeat in the 2020 presidential election, Donald Trump will refuse to leave the White House. Instead, an angry mob will drag his body to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial where Senator Mitch McConnell will be forced to kill and eat the 45th incumbent in a deranged cannibal ritual. Rightwing cults will rise up: new communities that worship Trump's dead excreted relics. But they will eventually die in some pestilent version of the Rapture, leaving behind an equitable, caring society.

"That's pretty much it," says John Cameron Mitchell after I sum up his fevered fantasy for a future America as outlined in the title track of his debut solo LP, New American Dream Vol 1 and accompanying animated video. "Trump's shit has infected the water supply and turned everyone into the Unabomber."

> I wrote Picaflor depressed in the bath, singing into my iPhone

As the title suggests, this is just the first instalment in a state-of-the-nation duology that the 57-year-old actor, playwright, screenwriter and director wrote with the help of 40-plus collaborators including Ezra Furman, Xiu Xiu's Jamie Stewart, Neutral Milk Hotel's Julian Koster and Alynda Segarra of Hurray for the Riff Raff.

"It's about the joy of trying to do something," says Mitchell. "This feels very much like a watershed year, when everyone will remember the young people, the Generation Z kids who were creating alternatives. I'm not a 'cancel culture' person. I am a 'Let's create the alternative' person."

Twenty-two years ago, Mitchell and Stephen Trask created Hedwig and the Angry Inch, the gender-fluid glam-rock musical that became a defining text for the 21st-century trans community. At the time, he referred to it as "an oasis in a time of panic". New American Dream feels similar: an album fuelled by sadness, rage and helplessness that still has an undercurrent of optimism and hope.

"Before lockdown," says Mitchell, speaking from his home in Massachusetts, "I was doing a Hedwig-themed tour. I was about to go to Korea, Japan, New York. And then everything stopped. But I actually thrive in isolation."

He found himself self-isolating in a 100-year-old stone hut near Palm Springs, bored and depressed. So he reached out to various musical friends who sent him instrumental tracks that he could write melody and lyrics to. "Kind of like the surrealist drawing game Exquisite Corpse." He began developing "a lockdown-inspired remotely organised platonic musical orgy".

He explains: "I was talking to Our Lady J who's this wonderful trans writer and singer. She'd been looking at homeless people during the pandemic and thinking, 'How do you shelter at home when you have no home?' That became our first song, See You Again. Thorgy Thor from RuPaul's Drag Race added violin, Eleanor Norton added cello and we suddenly had something to work with."

Financially stable thanks to his role as an acerbic magazine editor in the TV show Shrill, Mitchell decided that "we should keep doing this as a benefit album for the three causes closest to my heart: a trans justice group, an African American scholarship programme and this Covid food bank in Mexico City, which has been helping sex workers and migrants who are afraid to go to the other food banks."

A number of the songs on the album were inspired by the political, financial and human rights crises in the US including Segarra's forlornly beautiful American Sickness ("How did it come to this? / I know for some shame no longer exists") and Say Their Names, a lament for all the trans women killed in America in the past 12 months, which Mitchell wrote with the pop songwriter and queer artist Leland.

"The person reading out the names of the dead on that," says Mitchell, "is Melania Brown, the sister of Layleen Polanco, a 27-year-old Afro-Latinx trans woman who died at Rikers Island jail on 7 June 2019."

While Mitchell agrees New American Dream is "definitely an album about right now", he stresses that "there are love songs here also". These include the gorgeous No Debt, written with Ezra Furman and inspired by Denis Johnson's 1992 short story collection Jesus' Son, and two songs, Sophia and Picaflor, written with the French singer/songwriter Izae, who Mitchell contacted on Instagram because he liked his cover of a Hedwig song.

"Picaflor was the first song I ever wrote after a terrible breakup," says Mitchell. "You know, depressed in a bath and singing into my iPhone. Izae came back with a wonderful chord progression so I said, 'Would you mind playing my boyfriend on this song? We still haven't met in person."

With the album completed and volume two in the works, Mitchell says: "A couple of publishing companies have been in touch with concerns about it being a benefit album. One said, 'What if it's a hit?' I'm like, 'Have you listened to the songs? This is all cabaret baby, relax. Nothing's going top 10 here."

New American Dream Vol 1 by John Cameron Mitchell and Friends is available to download from newamericandream.bandcamp.com.

Giving little away … Theroux in his study

Review Louis Theroux: Life on the Edge, BBC Two

A compendium of oddballs, believers and neo-Nazis that still shocks

★★★☆☆

Lucy Mangan

Louis Theroux: Life on the Edge, which showcased the highlights of the documentary maker's 25 years in the weirdo-pursuit biz, probably wants to be called a retrospective rather than a clip job. I am feeling generous, so I will let you choose. But there were a lot of clips, and not much else.

But what clips they were. The first episode of four thematically arranged outings dealt with matters of belief. So we met – or re-met, if you remember the inaugural episode of Louis Theroux's Weird Weekends in 1998 – Colonel Bo Gritz. The real-life inspiration for Rambo and the founder of the Almost Heaven covenant community, Gritz and his ilk were last seen hunkering down in the Idaho hills and prepping for war with the federal government and the ensuing New World Order. A brief Zoom call to catch up with the head of the community's leading family, Mike, revealed that he has retained his old certainties and is impressed with Trump's fearlessness in sticking it to the gubernatorial Man.

Next up was more 1998 footage, this time of the Rev Robert Short channelling unearthly lifeforms in the Weird Weekends' episode about UFOs and the Alien Resistance Movement ("We have killed extraterrestrials – we consider ourselves warrior knights"). The year after that it was Black Nationalism, followed by the Whites film in 2000, and Louis and the Nazis after that. During his interview with the neo-Nazis in their memorabilia-lined garage, they became suspicious that Theroux was Jewish ("A Jew would not be allowed on my property … Are you a fucking Jew?"). It remains utterly horrible to watch, especially when Theroux stood his ground and would neither confirm nor deny it. And it is all the more upsetting when you realise its relevance has only increased since its first broadcast 20 years ago.

There was a glimmer of hope from the other participants, Lamb and Lynx Gaede, who had been formed by their white supremacist mother into the Holocaust-denying pre-teen pop group Prussian Blue. They publicly renounced their (her) beliefs nearly a decade ago. "Racist beliefs are taught and learned," they said in another Zoom chat with Theroux. "And they can also be unlearned."

"Belief" as a theme was stretched to include the near sociopathic self-belief of the motivational speaker and performance hypnotist Marshall Sylver. He has gone bald since we last saw him but he has also avoided, via a hung jury, a conviction for obtaining money under false pretences so, you know, swings and roundabouts.

That made the absence of Theroux's most famous true believers – the members of the Westboro Baptist church (wavers of "God Hates Fags" placards and picketers of US servicemen's funerals on the grounds that they died protecting a country that does not persecute "degenerates") all the more conspicuous. Maybe Theroux's two films about that spiritually twisted clan are being saved for another episode, possibly titled Regrettable Oxygen of Publicity Given to Hate Groups Who Then Gained a Profile and a Power the World Could Well Have Done Without. We shall see.

The clips were interspersed with scenes of Theroux rooting through his loft and study for the original research material while musing on what drew him to certain groups and people. As ever, he was far too controlled and cautious to give much away. Disingenuousness has always been a notable part of the Theroux brand – or a tool of his trade, for this is not a criticism – but it could perhaps have been set slightly more aside for these supposedly reflective pauses on a quarter century of work. Maybe he could have permitted us a little more insight into his process, rather than repeating previous explanations such as being drawn to those who have faith because, as a long-time atheist, he can muster none of his own.

Other motivations were mentioned – "There is a pleasure in seeing someone do something really weird," he said after one of the Rev Short's convulsive inter-planetary channelling sessions. "I don't want to complicate it – it's funny." But that was about it for new insight. A documentary about Theroux would almost certainly be a meta-step to far, but it would be interesting to see him pushed on matters of, say, unintended consequences, unspoken potential complicity, the boundary between disingenuousness and lying or hypocrisy. They are not charges to be brought – I would just be intrigued to hear his thoughts.

In the meantime, I will keep you informed of if and when the Hamiltons are due to reappear. We are all too fragile to cope with that without due warning. Stay safe.

And another thing

The producers of Westworld are reuniting to bring us an adaptation of Michael Crichton's Sphere. Westworld underwater? It's too much, I tell you, it's too much!

Sue Perkins: Along the US-Mexico Border

9pm, BBC One

Fresh from her light-hearted jaunt to Japan in 2019, Sue Perkins takes a somewhat more serious approach to the borderlands between the US and Mexico, examining how Trump's nationalistic rhetoric is affecting people's lives on both sides. We open in Tijuana, where Perkins hears from migrants who hope to get over the border, as well as from American retirees living in the area and medical tourists looking for cheap dental work. Concludes tomorrow evening.

Ammar Kalia

The Repair Shop
4.30pm, BBC One
Jay Blades and the master craftsmen are back in the barn for a new series of surprisingly emotional repair jobs. Up first is a pair of vintage weighing scales that are brought in by Tamzin, which she hopes mechanical specialist Steve Fletcher can fix to bring back memories of baking with her late father. **AK**

Mindful Escapes: Breathe, Release, Restore
7pm, BBC Four
Sick of watching animals being hunted to death, reaffirming the brutal hierarchy of the natural world? Then this could be the soothing solution for you: screensaver footage of animals accompanied by calming techniques from the former Buddhist monk and Headspace founder, Andy Puddicombe. **AK**

Africa Turns the Page: The Novels That Shaped a Continent
9pm, BBC Four
Nigerian-born David Olusoga tells the story of the African novel. From the 1950s, writers such as Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka paid a price for truth-telling. More recently, novelists from the diaspora have transformed the international image of Africa.
Ellen E Jones

Love Island USA
9pm, ITV2
There's no escaping it: after coronavirus made shooting its UK counterpart "logistically impossible", Love Island USA is here to fill that void, with a new version set in Vegas. Participants will be sequestered in a "bubble" on top of a boutique hotel, looking to bag that $50,000 jackpot.
Ali Catterall

Inside Chelsea: Britain's Wealthiest Borough
10pm, BBC Two
We've had the faux glamour of Made in Chelsea. Now, reporter Mehreen Baig, joined by photographer and local Amanda Eliasch, scratches beneath the lustre of the London borough where annual salaries are three times the national average. **AK**

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Crimewatch Roadshow Live (T) **10.0** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **11.0** Ill Gotten Gains (T) **11.45** Britain's Housing Scandal (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News (T) **1.45** Land Girls (T) (R) **2.30** Hairy Bikers' Best of British (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** Garden Rescue (T) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) **5.15** Pointless (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.35** Panorama: Fighting for An Education (T)

8.05 **EastEnders** (T) Ian is more determined than ever to buy Dotty's silence.
8.30 **Ghosts** (T) (R) A hotel chain makes Mike and Alison an offer. Last in the series.
9.0 **Sue Perkins: Along the US-Mexico Border** (T) (1/2) The comedian travels one of the world's most contentious national borders.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Famalam** (T) Detective Moses Mountree returns to Midsomer.
11.10 **Canada's Drag Race** (T) (10/10) The three remaining queens battle for the title.
12.10 **Have I Got a Bit More News for You** (T) (R) **12.50** Weather (T) **12.55** News (T)

BBC Two

6.0 **Animal Park** (T) (R) **6.45** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **8.15** Great Asian Railway Journeys (T) (R) **8.30** The Week in Parliament (T) **9.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** The Boss (T) (R) **1.45** David Niven: Talking Pictures (T) (R) **2.30** FILM A Matter of Life and Death (1946) (T) **4.15** Blitz Cities (T) (R) **4.45** Blitz Cities (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** The Farmers' Country Showdown (T) (R) **7.0** Celebrity Antiques Road Trip (T) (R)

8.0 **Tom Kerridge: Lose Weight for Good** (T) (R) The cook tackles special treats.
8.30 **University Challenge** (T) A first-round match.
9.0 **The Diagnosis Detectives** (T) Twelve medical experts must treat a man with a devastating skin condition and a woman suffering a dramatic decline in health.

10.0 **Inside Chelsea: Britain's Wealthiest Borough** (T) With Mehreen Baig.
10.45 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.30 **Louis Theroux: Life on the Edge** Beyond Belief (R) (1/4)
12.30 **Countryfile** (T) (R) **1.30** Home Is Where the Art Is (T) (R) **2.15** Murder, Mystery and My Family (T) (R) **3.0** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News (T) **1.55** Local News (T) **2.0** Judge Rinder (T) **3.0** Supermarket Sweep (T) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News (T) **6.30** News (T) **7.0** Emmerdale (T) Belle is upset when Paddy confronts her for starting a family feud. **7.30** Coronation Street (T) Geoff shows Sally his true colours as he tries to assure Tim that he is the innocent party.

8.0 **Inside Animal A&E** (T) New series following the A&E departments of Blue Cross animal hospitals in London Victoria and Grimsby.
8.30 **Coronation Street: Famous Faces** (T) (8/8) Star turns, including Ian McKellen and Joanna Lumley.
9.0 **Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?** (T) New series.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Local News** (T)
10.45 **Heathrow: Britain's Busiest Airport** (T) (R) Hugh has a potential mess on his hands.
11.15 **Inside Britain's Food Factories** (T) (R)
11.45 **All Elite Wrestling** (T)
12.35 **WWTBAM?** (T) (R) **1.25** Ideal World **3.0** Tour de France Highlights

Channel 4

6.30 **Mike & Molly** (T) (R) **7.15** Cheers (T) (R) **8.10** Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) **9.40** Frasier (T) (R) **10.10** Frasier (T) (R) **10.40** Frasier (T) (R) **11.10** Undercover Boss USA (T) (R) **12.05** News (T) **12.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.05** River Cottage (T) (R) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **Supershoppers** (T) The team revisit previously featured reports.
8.30 **Jamie: Keep Cooking Family Favourites** (T) A makeover for roast chicken.
9.0 **The Yorkshire Jobcentre** (T) A member of the social justice team helps a client prepare for a test that could lead to a job.

10.0 **999: What's Your Emergency?** (T) (R) Northants police tackle domestic incidents.
11.05 **24 Hours in A&E** (T) (R)
12.10 **Call the Cops** (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.55** Couples CDWM (T) (R) **2.50** This Is Us (R) **3.40** Work on the Wild Side (R) **4.35** Fifteen to One (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake! 9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Can't Pay?... (T) (R) **12.10** News (T) **12.15** Traffic Cops (T) (R) **1.10** Access (T) **1.15** Home and Away (T) (R) **1.45** Neighbours (T) **2.15** FILM The Killer Choice (Jared Cohn, 2019) (T) **4.0** Friends (T) (R) Double bill. **5.0** News (T) **5.30** Neighbours (T) (R) **6.0** Home and Away (T) (R) **6.30** News (T) **7.0** Premiership Rugby Highlights (T) Action from the 18th round, including Harlequins v Bath and Worcester Warriors v Bristol Bears.

8.0 **Ultimate Police Interceptors** (T) Examples of officers on the front line who face abuse in the line of duty. Includes news update.
9.0 **Ambulance: Code Red** (T) A critical care team are called to a road traffic accident in which a teenage boy has been knocked over on the way to school.

10.0 **Suffolk Strangler: 30 Days of Terror** (T) The case of Steven Wright.
11.05 **Missing Or Murdered? Claudia Lawrence** (T) (R)
12.05 **The Murder Next Door** (T) (R) **1.0** Live Casino **3.10** Eamonn & Ruth: How the Other Half Lives (T) (R) **4.0** Britain's Greatest Bridges (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Mindful Escapes: Breathe, Release, Restore** Breathe (T) (1/4) Immersive viewing experience, featuring a combination of sequences from natural history programmes with narration from Buddhist monk Andy Puddicombe. **7.30** The Joy of Painting (T) Bob Ross paints a mountain scene.

8.0 **Africa With Ade Adepitan** (T) (4/4) The presenter visits Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.
9.0 **Africa Turns the Page: The Novels That Shaped a Continent** (T) David Olusoga explores the African novel, and a time when writers became the conscience of a continent.

10.0 **Mexico: Earth's Festival of Life** Mountain worlds (T) (1/3) Natural history.
11.0 **Storyville: The Queen of Africa - Miriam Makeba** (T)
12.15 **Art on the BBC: Michelangelo** (T) **1.15** Jigs & Wigs: Irish Dancing (T) **1.45** Mindful Escapes (T) **2.15** Joy of Painting (T) **2.45** Africa Turns the Page (T)

Other channels

Dave

6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Brojects Double Bill **8.0** American Pickers: Best Of **9.0** Storage Hunters Double Bill **10.0** American Pickers: Best Of Double Bill **12.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **1.0** Top Gear Double Bill **3.0** Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul **4.0** Top Gear Double Bill **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Judge Romesh Double Bill **8.0** Jon Richardson: Ultimate Worrier **9.0** The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan **10.0** Hypothetical **11.0** Alan Davies: As Yet Untitled **12.0** QI XL **1.0** Taskmaster **2.0** Dara Ó Briain's Go 8 Bit **3.05** Go 8 Bit: DLC Double Bill **4.0** Teleshopping

E4

All programmes from 11am to 7pm are double bills **6.0am** Hollyoaks Double Bill **7.0** The Goldbergs Double Bill **8.0** Don't Tell the Bride **9.0** Married at First Sight Australia **10.30** Big Bang Theory **11.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.0** Young Sheldon **1.0** Big Bang Theory **2.0** Man With a Plan **3.0** The Goldbergs **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** Young Sheldon **6.0** Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** Married at First Sight Australia **9.0** Supernanny USA **10.0** Wife Swap USA **11.0** Buffy Double Bill **1.0** Big Bang Theory Double Bill **2.0** Gogglebox **2.55** First Dates **3.50** Supernanny USA **4.40** Wife Swap USA

Film4

11.0am FILM Esther Waters (1948) **1.15** FILM Sword of Sherwood Forest (1960) **2.55** FILM The Weaker Sex (1948) **4.40** FILM Alvarez Kelly (1966) **6.55** FILM Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (2014) **9.0** FILM Die Hard 4.0 (2007) **11.35** FILM Jallikattu (2019) **1.25** FILM Pet (2016)

ITV2

6.0am Teleshopping **7.0** The Ellen DeGeneres Show **8.0** Emmerdale **8.30** Coronation Street **9.0** You've Been Framed! Gold **9.25** Superstore Double Bill **10.25** Roswell, New Mexico **11.25** Dinner Date **12.25** Emmerdale **12.55** Coronation Street **1.30** YBF! Gold **2.0** The Ellen DeGeneres Show **2.55** Ellen's Game of Games **3.50** The Masked Singer US **4.50** Dress to Impress **5.50** Take Me Out **7.0** YBF! Gold Double Bill **8.0** Two and a Half Men Double Bill **9.0** Love Island USA **10.50** Family Guy Double Bill **11.50** American Dad! Double Bill **12.45** The Cleveland Show Double Bill **1.40** Two and a Half Men Double Bill **2.35** Roswell, New Mexico **3.30** Teleshopping

More4

8.55am Food Unwrapped **9.15** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun **10.15** Find It, Fix It, Flog It Double Bill **12.15** Escape to the Chateau: DIY **1.15** Building the Dream **2.20** Four in a Bed **2.50** Four in a Bed **3.20** Four in a Bed **3.55** Four in a Bed **4.25** Four in a Bed **4.55** The Secret Life of the Zoo **5.55** Love It Or List It **6.55** Escape to the Chateau: DIY **7.55** Grand Designs **9.0** Inside the Zoo: Down Under **10.0** It Was Alright in the 1970s **11.0** Sex Toy Stories **12.05** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown **1.05** It Was Alright in the 1970s **2.10** Inside the Zoo: Down Under **3.10** Food Unwrapped **4.0** Teleshopping

Sky One

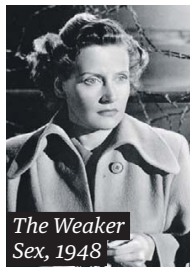
6.0am Futurama Double Bill **7.0** Animal House Double Bill **8.0** Wild Vets Double Bill **9.0** The Dog Whisperer **10.0** Send in the Dogs **11.0** NCIS: LA Double Bill **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 Double Bill **3.0** Manifest **4.0** Modern Family Double Bill **5.0** The Simpsons **5.30** Futurama Double Bill **6.30** The Simpsons **7.0** The Simpsons **7.30** The Simpsons **8.0** An Idiot Abroad **9.0** FILM Beverly Hills Cop (1984) **11.0** Prodigal Son **11.55** The Force: North East **12.55** The Twilight Zone **2.0** Hawaii Five-0 **3.0** Road Wars **4.0** The Flash **5.0** Supergirl

Sky Arts

6.0am Passions **7.0** 2Cellos at Sydney Opera House **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected Double Bill **10.0** Mystery of the Lost Paintings **11.0** Discovering: Jean Simmons/Christopher Plummer **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected Double Bill **2.0** What Was Virginia Woolf Afraid of? **3.0** Mystery of the Lost Paintings **4.0** Music Icons: British Rhythm & Blues/Pop Rock **5.0** Discovering: Jeff Bridges/Sean Connery **7.0** Cezanne: Portraits of a Life **8.0** Discovering: Queen **9.0** André Rieu: Shall We Dance? **12.0** The Undiscovered Peter Sellers **1.0** The Women Who Run Hollywood **2.0** Discovering: Jeff Bridges/Sean Connery **4.0** The Directors **5.0** Auction Double Bill

Sky Atlantic

6.0am The Guest Wing **7.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **8.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **9.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **10.0** Elementary **11.0** Fish Town **12.0** Urban Secrets **1.0** Elementary **2.0** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets Double Bill **4.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **5.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **6.0** CSI: Crime Scene Investigation **7.0** Blue Bloods Double Bill **9.0** Lovecraft Country **10.10** True Blood Double Bill **12.30** Little Birds **1.30** Oz **2.40** Californication Double Bill **4.0** Fish Town Double Bill


The Weaker Sex, 1948

Radio

Radio 3

6.30 Breakfast. With Petroc Trelawny. **9.0** Essential Classics. Suzy Klein presents. **12.0** Composer of the Week: Ludwig van Beethoven (1/5) **1.0** Proms Chamber Music 2020. A 2018 recital by the percussionist Colin Currie and the JACK Quartet, performing works by Xenakis, Simon Holt and Suzanne Farrin. **2.0** Afternoon Concert: Summer Festivals. A week of highlights from recent European summer festivals, starting with music from this year's Schleswig-Holstein festival. **4.30** Early Music Now. An all-Vivaldi concert by the Jupiter Ensemble and the lutenist Thomas Dunford. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** In Tune Mixtape **7.30** Proms 2020. A live performance from the Royal Albert Hall. **10.0** Music Matters (R) **10.45** The Essay: My Life in Food - Origins. Joanna Robertson discusses her love of food. (R) (1/5) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night. Includes a recital by the pianist Claire Huangci.

Radio 4

6.0 Today **9.0** Start the Week: Meritocracy and Inequality. Amol Rajan is joined by the political philosopher Michael Sandel and the authors Elif Shafak and David Goodhart. **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Ramble Book, by Adam Buxton. (1/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour. 10.45 Drama: Prostrate, by Martin Jameson. (1/5) **11.0** My Name Is... Documentary that in each episode focuses on one individual with experiences reflecting an issue in the news. (7/7) **11.30** Loose Ends (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** The Lying Life of Adults. By Elena Ferrante, abridged by Sara Davies. Read by Juliet Aubrey. (6/10) **12.18** You and Yours **1.0** The World at One **1.45** From the Mayflower to the Moon (and Back Again): Lewis and Clark's Expedition Out West. With Joe Queenan. (6/10) **2.0** Drama: Trust - WALT, by Jonathan Hall. Contemporary education drama starring Julie Hesmondhalgh and Jonathan Keeble. (1/3) **2.45** Museum of Lost Objects: Looted Sumerian Seal, Baghdad (R) (10/10) **3.0** Brain of Britain (11/17) **3.30** The Food Programme: A Different Kind of Swat Team - Food in Lockdown **4.0** My Dream Dinner Party: Jack Whitehall (2/3) **4.30** Beyond Belief (4/8) **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **6.0** News **6.30** The Museum of Curiosity. The panel show returns as host John Lloyd is joined by new co-curator Alice Levine. (1/6) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **7.45** Prostrate (R) (1/5) **8.0** A Short History of Solitude: Stepping Out. With Thomas Dixon. (2/3) **8.30** Crossing Continents: South Africa (R) **9.0** My City in Lockdown (R) **9.30** Start the Week (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Lying Life of Adults (R) **11.0** Pause the Plie (R) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day: Laughing Kookaburra (R)

Radio 4 Extra

6.0 Maugham's Eye View (1/6) **6.30** The Great Impersonation (1/5) **7.0** Micha el Fabbri's Dyslexicon (2/2) **7.30** I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue (5/6) **8.0** I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again (3/14) **8.30** It Sticks Out Half a Mile (14/14) **9.0** Guess What? (9/10) **9.30** Gilbert Without Sullivan (R) **10.0** Kipps (1/5) **11.0** TED Radio Hour **12.0** I'm Sorry I'll... **12.30** It Sticks Out... **1.0** Maugham's Eye View (1/6) **1.30** The Great Impersonation (1/5) **2.0** Guess What? (9/10) **2.30** Gilbert Without Sullivan (R) **3.0** Kipps (1/5) **4.0** TED Radio Hour **5.0** Dyslexicon **5.30** I'm Sorry I... **6.0** Journey Into Space: Operation Luna (6/13) **6.30** A Good Read (3/9) **7.0** I'm Sorry I'll... **7.30** It Sticks Out... **8.0** Maugham's Eye View (1/6) **8.30** The Great Impersonation (1/5) **9.0** TED Radio Hour **9.50** Inheritance Tracks **10.0** I'm Sorry I... **10.30** The Nick Revell Show (6/6) **11.0** The News Quiz (1/8) **11.30** Radio Active (8/8) **12.0** Journey Into Space **12.30** A Good Read (3/9) **1.0** Maugham's Eye View (1/6) **1.30** The Great Impersonation (1/5) **2.0** Guess What? (9/10) **2.30** Gilbert Without...**3.0** Kipps (1/5) **4.0** TED Radio Hour **5.0** Dyslexicon **5.30** I'm Sorry I...

TODAY'S PET CORNER ANSWER **JACQUES DERRIDA**

Friday's solutions

Wordsearch

R	E	V	O	N	A	H	D	H
F	D	V	I	A	I	A	U	C
B	T	N	E	C	L	I	S	I
H	R	B	U	A	S	B	S	N
A	A	E	E	M	O	I	E	U
M	G	R	M	N	T	D	L	M
B	T	L	N	E	S	R	D	A
T	T	I	E	E	N	L	O	S
U	N	R	O	T	E	R	D	
R	T	D	C	A	I	S	F	E
G	S	C	O	L	O	G	N	E

Sudoku no 4943

6	7	8	1	2	9	5	4	3
2	3	4	5	6	8	9	7	1
5	1	9	4	7	3	6	8	2
4	6	1	7	9	2	3	5	8
7	9	3	8	5	1	2	6	4
8	5	2	3	4	6	1	9	7
9	8	5	2	1	7	4	3	6
3	2	6	9	8	4	7	1	5
1	4	7	6	3	5	8	2	9

Suguru

4	1	3	2	1	4
3	2	5	4	5	2
1	4	1	3	1	3
2	3	2	5	4	2
1	5	4	1	3	1
3	2	3	5	4	2

Word wheel
BREAKAWAY

Saturday's Quick crossword Solution no 15,704

E	C	O	N	O	M	I	S	T	■	G	■	A
■	O	■	E	■	A	■	O	■	E	R	I	N
S	W	E	E	T	T	A	L	K	■	A	■	C
■	L	■	R	■	I	■	D	■	I	N	C	H
F	■	I	■	E	N	D	E	D	■	D	■	O
A	N	N	A	L	S	■	R	A	P	P	E	R
I	■	S	■	U	■	■	■	N	■	R	■	I
R	A	P	I	D	S	■	A	D	R	I	F	T
T	■	E	■	E	N	T	R	Y	■	X	■	E
R	A	C	Y	■	O	■	C	■	B	■	H	■
A	■	T	■	M	O	T	H	E	A	T	E	N
D	O	O	M	■	Z	■	E	■	R	■	E	■
E	■	R	■	V	E	R	S	A	T	I	L	E

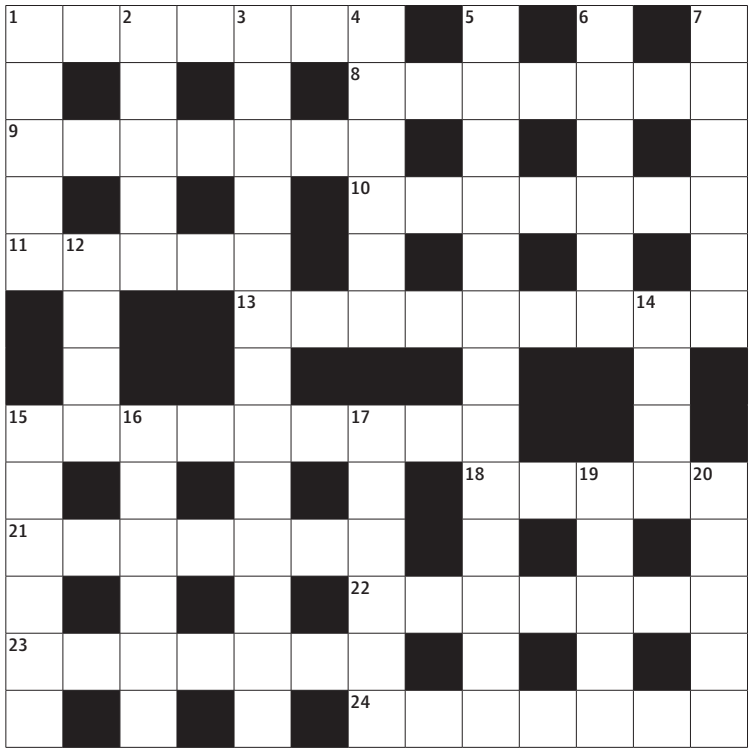
Quick crossword no 15,705

Across

1 Form of flood defence (7)
8 So-so (7)
9 Graceful - refined (7)
10 Thrown out (7)
11 One-person canoe (5)
13 When one is fully grown (9)
15 Eleventh-hour (4-5)
18 Odds (5)
21 Grow coarse (7)
22 Turn aside (7)
23 Simon Peter or Judas Iscariot, say (7)
24 Plant stems growing along the ground (7)

Down

1 Tiny spot (5)
2 Hard up (5)
3 Clear-cut (5,3,5)
4 French cake (6)
5 State of bliss (7,6)
6 Signal for soldiers to return to quarters – it gets under your skin (6)
7 Devoted (6)
12 Patch (4)
14 Transparent (4)
15 Lasso (6)
16 Daze - shock (6)
17 Gentle - offer (6)
19 Sidestep (5)
20 They come in flights (5)



Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate).
To buy puzzle books, visit guardianbookshop.com or call 0330 333 6846.

Sudoku no 4947

Easy. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

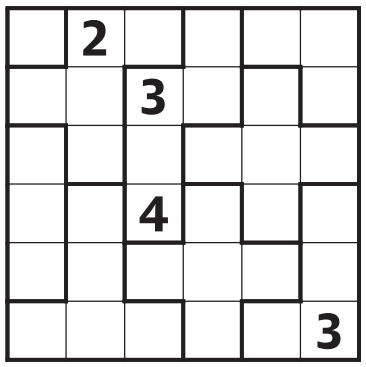
						4		
7	6			9				1
4	9					5		7
			2	1			5	
6		4	5		3	7		
			4	6			3	
9	5					4		6
8	2			4				3
							7	

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-30. Good-25. Average-18.

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of 2 squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.



Wordsearch

Can you find 13 words associated with sailing in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

M	L	I	A	S	N	I	A	M
S	Y	K	J	I	B	V	D	G
J	P	S	N	E	O	R	A	N
R	L	I	R	U	A	S	N	I
L	E	T	N	W	B	O	C	G
E	H	D	D	N	Y	T	H	G
E	C	N	D	A	A	L	O	I
K	I	S	C	U	O	K	R	R
W	T	H	E	U	R	E	E	L
M	T	E	P	O	R	S	O	R
T	N	A	V	I	G	A	T	E

Steve Bell
If ... flashback

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THESE LIBDEMS THEN?
I FEEL A BIT SORRY FOR THEM, ACTUALLY...
YOU'RE SO WOOLLY YOU MAKE ME FEEL PHYSICALLY ILL!
17·1·6671-
-©Steve Bell 2011

Pet corner

Whose dog is this?
a. Jacques Derrida
b. Jean-Paul Sartre
c. Simone de Beauvoir
d. Albert Camus
Answer top right

The commuter: an English archetype in retreat *John Harris, page 3*

The forgotten victims of the Beirut blast *Nesrine Malik, page 4*

David Graeber, anthropologist and activist *Obituaries, page 6*

The Guardian Monday 7 September 2020

Opinion and ideas

Journal

Elliot Dallen

At 31, I'm coming to the end of my life. This is what I want to pass on

ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON

At the beginning of April I wrote a piece for the Guardian. If you haven't read it, the headline pretty much sums it up: "Terminal cancer means I won't see the other side of lockdown". Given the pandemic and the announcement of shielding for vulnerable people, I thought I wouldn't be able to live out my last few months in the way I'd imagined. It seemed like I would be stuck alone, with no light at the end of the tunnel, and without the comfort of friends or family.

Five months on, I'm still here, but much has changed. Thankfully, the experience wasn't as bleak as you might think. During the first few weeks of lockdown I found I was floating nicely through the time by staying occupied and upbeat. In many ways, you can't beat the liberation of being able to wake up when you feel like it, having few plans set in stone and being able to do whatever you want with the time you have.

Over the past couple of months, though, my energy levels have dropped, and I have started doing less. I look drastically different. I have lost a lot of weight. A 20-minute coughing fit is now part of my morning routine while my chest tries to settle itself. It's nothing that some steroids, morphine, an iced drink to settle my throat and time spent dry-heaving in front of a bucket won't eventually sort out, but it can get really distressing – like an intrinsic panic response.

At points I was really struggling. The loneliness of Covid was making me miserable, and I needed company. But my sister came to the rescue at just the right moment. She moved back into our shared flat in June. It made a huge difference, and I don't know where I would be without her. After months of isolation, having a family member close by changed everything.

At the same time, out of the blue, I was told I was finally suitable for a drug trial that had been dangled in front of me for more than a year. The oncologists made it very clear that this would not be a "magic bullet", and the goal would be to extend life by a few months. The aim of the treatment would be to stop the cancer stealing all the nutrients and energy my body needs.

But I was not in the same good shape I had been in at the beginning of other treatments. And after pinning my hopes on the idea of a drug trial for so long, it took just over a week for it to batter me. My days involved moving from my room to the sofa, feeling like I had the flu and struggling with mental fog. Almost immediately I realised I just couldn't do it. Life for me is about living, not just clocking up the years. And this drug made living almost impossible.

I realised I had to finally accept the inevitable: that there was no treatment. I thought this mindset would leave me feeling completely liberated. I was wrong. With nothing left to fight, it really was just a question of waiting. The battle became emotional and mental. It has forced me to reflect.

The first three decades of my life were pretty standard. Well, actually they were awesome, and everything was going pretty perfectly with regards to work, health, relationships and friends. I had plans for the future, too: learn some Spanish, see more of central America, and get a bit more out of it with some volunteering too.

I imagined settling down in my 30s or 40s with kids, a mortgage and so on. Or maybe I wouldn't. Maybe my friends' children would call me Uncle Elliot as their parents gathered in the kitchen looking slightly concerned for their single 45-year-old friend about to set off travelling around Mongolia. Either way, growing older with my mates and living my life to the full was always my ambition.

Of course, the second part of this storyline won't be written now. It's a shame I don't get to see what happens. But everybody dies, and there will always be places and experiences missing from anyone's life – the world has too much beauty and adventure for one person to see. I will miss marriage or children, blossoming careers and lives moving on. But I'm not alone in my life being cut short, and I think my time has been pretty good. I haven't asked for a specific prognosis, as I don't believe there's much to gain from doing so, but I think it's a matter of weeks. Medicine has luckily turned this into quite a gentle process. That really does take a lot of the fear away. And I'm hoping impending death now grants me the licence to sound prematurely wise and overly grandiose. Because I've had time to think about the things that are really important to me, and I want to share what I've discovered.

First, *the importance of gratitude*. During my worst moments – the shock of cancer diagnosis, the mental lows and debilitating symptoms of chemotherapy – it was difficult to picture any future moments of joy, closeness or love. Even so, at those times I found comfort in remembering what I have: an amazing family, the friends I've made and times I've shared with them, the privilege of the life I've had.

2

At 31, I'm coming to the end of my life. This is what I want to pass on

Elliot Dallen

← Continued from front

Second, *a life, if lived well, is long enough*. This can mean different things to different people. It might mean travel. I've had the good fortune to be able do this, and can confirm that the world is a wonderful place full of moments of awe and amazement. It may mean staying active, as much as possible – the human body is a wonderful thing. You only appreciate this when it starts to fail you. So when you find yourself slipping into autopilot, catch yourself, and take simple pleasure in movement, if you can.

Look after your body because it's the only one you have, and it's bloody brilliant. Knowing that my life was going to be cut short has also changed my perspective on ageing. Most people assume they will live into old age. I have come to see growing old as a privilege. Nobody should lament getting one year older, another grey hair or a wrinkle. Instead, be pleased that you've made it. If you feel like you haven't made the most of your last year, try to use your next one better.

Third, it's important to let yourself *be vulnerable and connect to others*. We live in a society that prizes capability and independence, two things that cancer often slowly strips away from you. This was naturally a very difficult pill to swallow for a healthy, able late-twentysomething male, but having to allow myself to be vulnerable and accept help has given me the best two years of my life, which was pretty inconceivable at the time of diagnosis.

Fourth, *do something for others*. Against the backdrop of Covid-19, Black Lives Matter and the desperate attempts of migrants to cross the Channel, my thoughts really turned to those who have not had my privilege – whether that's by virtue of socioeconomics, ethnicity or the country I was born in. I always try to remind myself of this.

Fifth, *protect the planet* – I can't leave this off because it's so important. I'll be gone soon, but humanity will still be faced with the huge challenge of reducing carbon emissions and saving habitats from destruction. In my time here, I've been lucky enough to see some natural wonders and understand how precious they are. Hopefully future generations will be able to say the same. But it will take a massive collective effort.

If you asked me what I'd want to leave behind, it would be a new awareness of these things among my friends – and anyone who'll listen, really. I was astonished by the number of people who responded to my article. I now find myself in a position where people are asking me how they can help or what they can do that would make me happy. Apart from the obvious – looking after each other once I've gone – I'm going to push for people to give, be that money or time. I've already had so many people ask which causes I recommend, and there are loads, but I'd say any that align with the "values" I've sketched out would have my blessing. Among friends and family there is talk of setting up a small charity in my memory.

Despite some very low times, it's worth repeating that the period since being diagnosed has been made not just bearable but actually fantastic. I've had new experiences that haven't seemed tainted by cancer – and those experiences were, as always, much better shared. In a situation that is pretty new for most of my loved ones and friends (I am yet to meet anyone I grew up with who has had to deal with cancer or a similar chronic illness at my age), it has been amazing watching them all rise to the challenge. I'm not sure if it's just that I know a high proportion of amazing people (possible) or if most human beings have this capacity for connecting and recognising what's truly important (very likely).

After the gut-punch of cancer diagnosis, I've really struggled to define a purpose for my own life. I found in time this came naturally. Life is for enjoyment. Make of it what you can.

● **Elliot Dallen** was diagnosed with adrenocortical carcinoma in 2018, aged 29
For details of the charity being set up in Elliot's memory, visit www.elliotdallentrust.org

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Education

Poorer pupils lost most during the pandemic. Now they need help to catch up

The evidence that educational inequality has grown sharply in England during the six months since schools closed in March may not be surprising. But it is dismaying. The gap in the results and post-school prospects of children from different socioeconomic backgrounds is a longstanding problem in the UK – not just for those whose opportunities are limited by weak qualifications, but for the society they belong to. Education is important in all sorts of ways, and is linked to health as well as income. New research suggesting that the gulf between disadvantaged and better-off pupils at English state schools has widened by 46% in a year should set alarm bells ringing.

The fiasco surrounding this summer's exam results makes the situation all the more worrying. It took intense public pressure to force a U-turn that ministers should have made as soon as it was clear that the algorithm used to calculate grades could accentuate existing links between attainment and wealth. Urgent and careful consideration must now be given to next year's exams, in Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as England and Wales, to avoid a situation where pupils from poorer backgrounds are penalised. Since they are much more likely to have lost out on lessons than richer pupils, particularly those at private schools that delivered more remote teaching, the risk of exacerbating unfairness continues. Adjustments to the timetable and content of exams would be a sensible mitigation.

The creation of a £1bn budget for catch-up tutoring was a positive sign that the government recognises the problem. But there is no quick fix for the learning loss caused by the pandemic. While evidence so far is based on teacher assessments of how much pupils missed between March and July, other factors have yet to be taken into consideration. These include the likelihood of further interruptions, which is greater in deprived households and neighbourhoods, where more people live in crowded conditions and suffer from ill health. Then there are issues connected with the return to school, with children who are already vulnerable to exclusion expected to find the adjustment to new rules and systems hardest, and concerns that 20,000 children with special educational needs have been "forgotten". In London, the expected end of free public transport for children will create a further barrier to education for thousands of families who lack the money for fares.

None of this is to say that the past six months have been a disaster for everyone. For some children who find school difficult, the break was a relief, while sons and daughters of key workers were in school (in smaller classes) throughout. But despite the initial sense of national emergency and feeling of togetherness that the pandemic fostered, it is beyond dispute that it has had a polarising effect. When people are forced out of the public sphere and on to their private resources, then the differences in those resources – be they physical space, relationships or access to education and technology – are amplified.

Self-evidently, this situation is worst for those who have least. For future graduates whose education will continue to age 21 or later, three months is a smaller proportion (and loss) than for pupils who leave at 18. Rising unemployment and a dysfunctional housing market mean that missed school is only one among many serious difficulties faced by millions of low-income households.

Schools policy cannot on its own solve the many problems associated with poverty, particularly when the latter is increasing. But targeted support for pupils who are recognised to have missed out, combined with a renewed focus on high-quality teaching, should help to minimise the harm caused to "generation Covid". The boost in teacher recruitment that always accompanies a recession should at least ensure that ministers, headteachers, unions and everyone else involved in the recovery effort will have colleagues to work with. Their work is of the utmost importance.

Diplomacy

A row over gas and national pride has put Turkey and Greece in dangerous waters

Some claim it has been centuries since the Mediterranean has been viewed as the cockpit of history. But great powers and coastline states, wishing to capture hydrocarbon riches, are today vying for mastery of the sea – or at least its eastern waves. The trouble surfaced last month when a Turkish frigate escorting an oil-and-gas exploration ship collided with a Greek naval vessel. Since then, tempers have flared, with the unresolved question of Cyprus providing a flashpoint between the two nations. Greek ships were last week joined by France, Italy and the United Arab Emirates in the waters around Cyprus. Turkey announced that Russia will hold naval exercises. Nato is right that the temperature needs lowering and ought to be congratulated for kickstarting talks aimed at de-escalation. Nato members ought to trade words, not blows.

In Turkey there has been a lurch towards authoritarianism under the executive presidency of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, while the country's military, economic and cultural power has expanded. Not since the Ottoman empire has the Turkish military had such a sprawling global footprint, with troops and drones recently saving a UN-recognised government in Tripoli from defeat. Despite a Covid recession, Turkish companies retain a global edge – taking advantage of cheap labour, made even cheaper by a weak Turkish lira, and access to European markets. Mr Erdoğan has also won favour in the Sunni Arab world by hosting 4 million Syrian refugees.

What irks Mr Erdoğan is that his nation cannot explore, and exploit, the Mediterranean seabed. If Egypt, Israel and Cyprus have been able to strike it rich with gas finds, he thinks, then why not Turkey? Ankara claims that a wall of Greek islands prevents Turkey from exploiting its own continental shelf. The question is to what degree an archipelago off the Turkish coast should be taken into account when determining the boundaries of economic zones. The UN convention on the law of the sea, which Turkey has not signed, supports Greece and the status quo.

Mr Erdoğan casts the international dispute as part of his revisionism. His political tradition sees the founding of modern Turkey not as a triumph, but as a missed opportunity. That is why the territories lost when the 1923 treaty of Lausanne established the borders of modern Turkey – such as the islands in the Aegean Sea – are today at the heart of his foreign policy.

The sparring of old enemies over borders, gasfields and national pride risks regional disorder. The competition over fossil fuels should be about how to stop using them. Arab powers and Israel, worried about Mr Erdoğan's brand of political Islam, have drawn closer to Greece. He might not even need the Mediterranean's hydrocarbons. Turkey ended up striking gas last month beneath the Black Sea. Washington, traditionally the guarantor of peace between the Aegean Nato rivals, has been largely silent. The door is open for the EU to act. Germany, which brokered a deal with Mr Erdoğan to stop the flight of Syrian refugees into Europe, has sensibly called for talks. There's room for give and take. The EU has threatened sanctions on Turkey's oil and gas sector, which could be broadened if the sabre-rattling continues. If Mr Erdoğan wants to be respected as a responsible partner then he must act like one.

The commuter is an English archetype – but for how long?

John Harris

Commuters in London in 1975
PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GRAHAM/GETTY

An unexpected new national stereotype has emerged with Covid. We are allegedly in a new era of "work-from-home buyers": people who are determined to minimise the amount of time they spend in their workplaces, and make their recent lifestyle changes permanent.

Massed interest in what estate agents call "coastal and country" properties has apparently led to the biggest monthly increase in house prices in more than 16 years. Meanwhile, all those exhortations from politicians and rightwing newspapers intended to get people travelling back into cities – which, in most cases, means London – are evidently not working. At the centre of all this lies something fascinating: a sudden questioning of commuting and everything it entails.

Four years ago, a report by the Royal Society for Public Health set out the basics of the daily national schlep to and from work. Nearly 25 million people in England and Wales were reckoned to be daily commuters. Between 2004 and 2016, the number of workers travelling each day for two hours or more had increased by 72%, from 1.7 to 3 million people. The text said that commuters "have on average lower life satisfaction, a lower sense that their daily activities are worthwhile, lower levels of happiness and a higher level of anxiety".

Because modern commuting tends to involve "passive travel" by car, train or bus rather than walking or cycling, the text went on, it can "lead to physiological effects, such as an increased pulse rate and higher systolic blood pressure", not to mention a higher body mass index. In short, all the evidence pointed to the unsurprising fact that commuting had long since become a threat to our health and wellbeing.

And although these facts apply across the UK, something about our collective acceptance of this grimness seems to go to the heart of the English character in particular. Small wonder, perhaps, that in a lot of self-consciously English popular music, the commuter is a central character: a perfect archetype on which to project all the suppressed misery that still, perhaps, explains who we are and how we live.

The template was set by the Kinks' 1969 song Shangri-La, and its portrait not just of the small pleasures offered by a home in suburbia, but "the little man who gets on the train" and "is too scared to complain / Cos he's conditioned that way". The most prolific exponents of the genre were Blur. On a piece about an imagined nobody called Ernold Same, the lyrics were recited by Ken Livingstone in adenoidal tones that evoked a living death: "Ernold Same caught the same train / At the same station, sat in the same seat / With the same nasty stain / Next to him the same old what's his name / On his way to the same place to do the same thing / Again and again".

> **The Kinks' 1969 song Shangri-La talked of 'the little man who gets on the train' and 'is too scared to complain'**

Now there may at least be a quiet pushback under way. Clearly, the chance to work from home extends to those only with sufficient space – not to mention sympathetic employers – and if the change lasts, it will surely highlight already existing inequalities. Moreover, here and elsewhere, if cities are now being problematised, no one should ignore the potential racial aspects of that. It's something that's already front and centre in Donald Trump's talking up of urban disorder, and his claim that Joe Biden and the forces that support him would "destroy the beautiful suburbs".

Meanwhile, in the places beyond city limits that may already be overrun with prospective buyers, rising property prices could worsen local housing problems, and fan resentments between incomers and those with local roots. All these things are a reminder of something obvious: that in societies still in thrall to the free(ish) market, social changes are rarely successfully managed, and are usually allowed to sow plenty of pain and disruption. But for better or worse, they often turn out to be unavoidable.

Of course, people may soon be vaccinated against the virus and crowding back into cars, trains and buses, if they are lucky enough to still have a job. But even that prospect does not quite gloss over the sense that habits long held to be the natural order of things suddenly feel contingent. Contrary to the idea that staying out of the office represents a licence to laziness, there is also rising interest in the idea that reclaiming time from commuting might benefit the economy: one Australian academic has recently estimated that in his country a massed switch to home-working might amount to a 13% increase in productivity.

The Cambridge academic Helen Thompson recently wrote in the New Statesman that "employment in the economy as we know it depends on plenty of unnecessary movement and some degree of pretence". She went on: "Commuting may not be essential, but hundreds of thousands are employed and a great volume of commercial property debt is serviceable because large numbers of people endure it." This led to a bracing conclusion: that "physically moving ourselves around the country is an economic necessity".

In this vision, the morning train is actually a treadmill. Now, notwithstanding the inequalities that a retreat from commuting will highlight, millions of people are aware of a different way of living. This, surely, is the kind of revelation that no one will be able to suddenly wish away, and the perfect trigger for something we ought to be getting used to by now. In a country already hurtling into a very uncertain future, it's one more social shift that will have no end of consequences.

The forgotten victims of the Beirut blast

Nesrine Malik

It is just over a month since the Beirut port explosion, and the footage from that day remains as shocking as it was when it first began to appear on our TV screens and social media. In fragments of video, the world saw Beirut life freeze in confusion at the unfamiliar sound of the explosion, then shatter as its impact hit. Among those bits of film we saw one scene, captured on domestic CCTV, that was replicated across the city - an African nanny instinctively scooping children up out of harm's way, and protecting them with her body.

Many of these nannies are now sleeping on the streets of Beirut. Most are starving. Even before the explosion, an economic crisis exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic meant that Lebanese employers could no longer pay their domestic workers. And so they made them gather their belongings, drove them to their embassies, and dumped them outside.

Last June alone, more than 100 Ethiopian domestic workers were left outside their home country's consulates. They live out of suitcases, and share mattresses. Some still try to maintain the discipline of wearing masks even as they sleep cheek by jowl on the unsanitary pavement.

Last week I spoke to Christine, a west African nanny and domestic worker who didn't want to use her real name for fear of reprisals from her employer. A veteran of the Beirut labour market, she told me that she was trying to raise some money to help abandoned African women go back to their countries of origin. But that journey can't be the priority. First, the women sleeping in the streets need to eat. If there is any money left over, it will be spent on shelter.

Travel from Lebanon to destinations in Africa is expensive, so the golden ticket home is reserved for the very sick who need to be with their families. She counts herself as one of the lucky ones, as her "madam" has kept her on, giving her a place to stay, and only reducing her salary by half.

At the heart of this human rights crisis is a system of migrant labour that remains a stain on many countries in the Arab world. Known as kafala, or "sponsorship", it effectively hands the fate of workers to their employers, who often withhold their passports to maintain control, and then demand that fees paid to employment agencies be repaid if workers want to leave before their contracts are up. This forces some workers to run away and become undocumented.

Anna, a nanny from the Philippines, told me how she managed to slip away from her abusive employer by layering three sets of underwear, tops and trousers on top of each other. That way she managed to bring with her a change of clothes without carrying a bag. She had lost so much weight by then, she jokes, that she could wear that much stuff without raising suspicion. She left everything else, including her passport, behind.

The cruelty of this kafala system isn't an unfortunate outcome of bureaucracy, it is the result of a racist hierachy in which black workers find themselves at the bottom. Of all the nationalities that jostle and hustle for a living in the Middle East and the wider Arab world, dark-skinned African women are the cheapest to hire, the most desperate, and the most abused.

All migrant workers in Lebanon are struggling, Christine told me, but African women suffer the most because "we are not considered human beings, everybody ignores us. We are invisible." Employers who can no longer pay their workers' salaries can still house and feed them, but they choose not to, even though many maids and nannies offer to work for free.

As with any crisis, the most vulnerable are pushed off the cliff edge. Lebanon is struggling with a corrupt and incompetent political class, and now the aftermath of an explosion that would challenge the most robust infrastructure. The size of the rebuilding process that Beirut faces means that hungry African women sleeping rough on Beirut's streets are rendered invisible twice - first by Lebanese society, which treats them as subhuman, and again by a global community that cannot see so many layers down into Lebanon's ranking of victims.

For now, Beirut's migrant workers are sticking together and sharing whatever meagre resources they have. They also try to warn others to stay away from the country. Christine fears they will still come in any case, because they believe they may be the lucky ones. "When you are poor you think, 'Let me try,' she says. "We just want to try."

Established 1906

Country diary

Caistor St Edmund, Norfolk

The last of the Victoria plums are rotting on the ground. I step around them, avoiding the sticky mess and gorging wasps. The air has a sweet alcoholic tang, like the day after a big party. Peacock butterflies and red admirals flit from fallen fruit, drinking the fermented juices. Docile and plum-drunk, a peacock lands on my hand. Its false eyes blink at me, as the wings, all tatty now, slowly open and shut.

I scavenge a couple of partly edible plums still hanging on the trees, making sure to check for maggots before biting in. Many of the fruit have been affected by the pinkish caterpillar of the plum moth, *Grapholita funebrana*, which burrows into the flesh to feed around the stone. When sated, they will spin a cocoon hidden away in the bark of the tree, to emerge as a dull greyish brown moth in May next year.

Looking up at the branches, rather than the ground, I nearly squish my summer-sandalled foot in it. There, beneath a tree, like vomit outside a nightclub, is a pile of dark purple excrement, dotted with plum stones and nestled in a scrape: a badger latrine. It has a musky, sweet but feral smell – to another badger it is a social message.

Badgers anoint their droppings with scent from the glands under their tail, typically to mark territory or indicate mating status. The badgers visiting this orchard were most likely from a sett about a mile away; their faeces will have marked this spot as theirs. Odour is an important part of badger communication and a community will also set scent on each other. Known as allo-marking, this enhances a combined, communal perfume that is different from that of other neighbouring clans.

The fallen plums signal the dying days of summer. This change of season always weighs heavily on me, like a hangover. Already, I miss the swifts screaming overhead. I look up, just to check, but they are gone. The third brood of swallows are nearly ready to leave too. All that is left is the alcoholic tang of rotting fruit and the sweet knowledge that badgers have been here. Now, I must turn my face to autumn.
Kate Blincoe

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Tony Abbott is the last person Britain needs

UK citizens are right to raise concerns about the appointment of the former Australian prime minister Tony Abbott as an official trade adviser (Report, 5 September). Boris Johnson notes that Abbott was elected by the "great liberal democratic nation of Australia", but he fails to note that Abbott broke almost every election promise he made, except his promise to remove the carbon tax that was actually working to reduce Australia's CO_2 emissions.

Abbott is renowned for making claims that appeal to his supporters, such as that the science behind climate change is "absolute crap", but seems to rarely base his actions on evidence. It is likely that Abbott's climate stance contributed to the Australian government ignoring pleas from fire chiefs for more resources to combat what was predicted to be a disastrous fire season in 2019, resulting in Australia's worst fires in living memory, a consequence of climate change.

It was even more galling that Abbott was given Australia's top honours for his work with indigenous communities, given that he axed half a billion dollars from activities aimed at helping our First Nations people.

To take Australia's top job on a litany of lies was an arrogant abuse of the democratic process, and it was unsurprising that he was deposed in an internal coup less than two years later. Given China's economic retaliation against Australia for expressing concern about their political motives, Australia is keen for new trade deals. Anyone could do this job. Tony Abbott is the last person you need.
Dr Tim Davis
Heidelberg, Victoria, Australia

● As an Australian who has had to endure Tony Abbott's contributions to politics for 25 years, I'm astounded to read that someone in the UK – the health secretary, Matt Hancock – suggested he was an "expert in trade". His ministerial roles were in the Howard government, all domestic portfolios: minister for employment services; minister for employment, workplace relations and small business; and minister for health and ageing.

He then spent time in opposition, ultimately becoming the Liberal party leader, which led to him becoming prime minister when the Coalition won government in the 2013 election. Aside from two years as PM, he has never held an international ministerial portfolio or trade role, and I can't recall any international trade deals being negotiated while he was PM. So what's made people think he's an expert on trade?
Don Dryley
Greensborough, Victoria, Australia

● In light of his diminished standing in his own party and the country, perhaps it's not Tony Abbott's experience of trade negotiations that Boris Johnson is hoping to learn from, but rather his experience of being ditched as prime minister and party leader in his first term in office.
David Wall
Northampton

● Connoisseurs of the wit and wisdom of Tony Abbott still cherish the speech he gave a few years ago in which he said: "No one, however smart … is the suppository of all wisdom." Now, thanks to YouTube, we can all share this penetrating insight. Fundamentally, his finest hour.
Michael Zagor
London

● Is anyone else wondering why Tony Abbott would cross the world to take up an unpaid position as a trade adviser for our government?
Andrew Lamkowski
Taunton, Somerset

In defence of the poly and criminology

Prof Stefan Collini (Universities are in chaos. Yet still we're told it's 'success', Journal, 1 September) presents some powerful arguments about chaotic university reforms. I would make one further point. A previous Conservative government laid the seeds for this debacle 30 years ago when it made polytechnics into universities, believing that this would raise their status. It is clear that this has not happened.

I was proud to be a senior lecturer at the Polytechnic of the South Bank with its four-year sandwich degree in mathematics and computing, enabling less academically qualified students to succeed and get jobs. I also ran a postgraduate course in maths education for students whose first degree fell short of expectations. Many students with third-class degrees went on to senior educational posts. I also had the privilege of teaching mature students in their 80s.

Polytechnics were set up to be different, with a stronger focus on teaching. They were local, serving their communities effectively and offering more vocationally oriented courses, though applied research was also encouraged. This alternative was sadly abolished by the stroke of a pen in 1992.
Prof Ramesh Kapadia
Surbiton, London

● I hope I have misunderstood Prof Paddy Hillyard's comments (Letters, 3 September) criticising criminology's expansion. If not, they exemplify what is wrong with the thinking of Britain's social science establishment. While it is true that student numbers in criminology have surged, this is neither the result of disciplinary "imperialism" nor a cause for concern. Perhaps it simply reflects that what and how criminology is taught is a marketable package that gives students what they want.

Rather than decrying our success, those in less happy fields might wish to reflect on lessons they can learn. If students are less concerned with the more "significant" fields of inquiry, perhaps it's because they do a poorer job of explaining why they matter.
Mark Littler
University of Huddersfield

● The sociologist Prof Hillyard writes disparagingly about criminology degrees. To add balance, when I read criminology at Cambridge in the 1960s, the university was riven with debate as to whether sociology was an academic discipline at all or merely a borrowing from several others.
Peter Quinn
Helperby, North Yorkshire

Battery swaps could electrify e-car sales

I read Jasper Jolly's article on the cost of electric cars (Upfront costs blamed as demand for electric cars starts to wane, 4 September) and he reiterated in passing what everyone always says about the need for a vast infrastructure of electric charging points across the land before owners will take up the electric car option. However, I keep wondering whether this is the right way of thinking.

Another approach would be for electric car manufacturers to design their cars in such a way that they can run on standardised batteries that owners could then simply swap out when they are close to running down and replace them with fully charged batteries from "battery garages". This would eliminate the range anxiety of electric car owners as they would never be far away from a garage and would not need to hang around for a car to recharge while on a journey. Will this ever be technically feasible? No idea. But it might be better than having millions of individual recharging points all over the place, and it could repurpose existing garages as battery swap-over points.
Barry Norris
Swansea

Corrections and clarifications

● An editorial misspelled the first name of Dr Hermann Hauser, co-founder of the chip-design company Arm, and mistakenly referred to him as Mr Hauser; it also incorrectly stated that he remained an Arm shareholder (Does taking back control mean sovereignty slips from the UK to the US?, 31 August, page 3, Journal).

● A photo purporting to show a lesser spotted woodpecker was actually of a great spotted woodpecker (Eyewitness, 3 September, page 20).

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com

Village effort saves those caught short

The closure of public toilets has caused a panic, not least for those travelling by car (Stand up for your rights, G2, 3 September). When our parish council decided to close the village centre toilets a splendid initiative took them over. Now, they are a pristine facility, funded and run by volunteers. Significantly, they are the only roadside toilets on the 50 miles between Harrogate and Kirby Lonsdale. Closure would have been a disaster for visitors to the Dales and the Lakes.
David Handley
Gargrave, North Yorkshire

● My mother and I once went to a theatre in Altrincham that played the national anthem (Letters, 4 September). As a staunch republican, she refused to stand. In the row in front was the only other person still sitting, so my mother leant forward to express solidarity, only to discover they were in a wheelchair.
Bob Hughes
Willoughby, Warwickshire

● I can well remember my husband bringing home bags of Huytonure (Letters, 4 September) from the local sewage works when he worked in Huyton. Our garden was the beneficiary of this wonderful stuff.
Beth Cresswell
Hightown, Merseyside

● Our elder daughter is married with a family and still has a small piece of her comfort blanket (Letters, 4 September). She is 52 next month.
Stella Waterer
Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

● "Police shoot dead man…" says your headline (5 September). Have they run out of live ones? One for Pedanticus, I think.
Val Spouge
Braintree, Essex

David Graeber

Anthropologist, author and activist who played a key role in the Occupy Wall Street movement

Graeber in London in 2018. He is reputed to have coined the statement: 'We are the 99%' REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

The anthropologist David Graeber, who has died suddenly aged 59, was remarkably successful in marrying research with direct action. He was influential in the Occupy Wall Street movement and is reputed to have coined the statement: "We are the 99%."

In 2011, for instance, he wrote a classic work of anthropology, Debt: The First 5,000 Years, in between organising with Occupy Wall Street in New York. In the book Graeber called for a biblical-style "jubilee" - meaning a wiping out of sovereign and consumer debts. "Debt," he wrote, "is the most efficient means ever created to take relations that are fundamentally based on violence and violent inequality and make them seem right and proper."

He noted that many of the people who protested with him, as well as those who took to the streets in Egypt and Spain in 2011, had one big thing in common: "Most of them were people who had gone through the educational system who were deeply in debt and who found it completely impossible to find jobs. The system has completely failed them ... If there's going to be any kind of society worth living in, we're going to have to create it ourselves."

Indeed, he described the Occupy movement as an "experiment in a post-bureaucratic society", telling the Guardian in 2015: "We wanted to demonstrate that we could do all the services that social service providers do without endless bureaucracy. In fact at one point at Zuccotti Park there was a huge plastic garbage bag that had $800,000 in it. People kept giving us money but we weren't going to put it in the bank. You have all these rules and regulations. And Occupy Wall Street can't have a bank account. I always say the principle of direct action is the defiant insistence on acting as if one is already free."

Born in New York, David was the son of working-class Jewish parents. His Polish-born mother, Ruth (nee Rubinstein), had been a garment worker who played the lead role in Pins and Needles, a 1930s musical revue staged by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. His Kansas-born father, Kenneth, who at college had been a member of the Youth Communist League, later fought with the International Brigades in the Spanish civil war

> **Huge swathes of people, in Europe and North America, spend their entire lives performing tasks they believe to be unnecessary**

before returning to New York to become a plate stripper for offset printers. David was raised in a co-operative apartment building that he told one interviewer "was suffused with radical politics".

By the time he was 16, he called himself an anarchist, though - as he made clear on Twitter - he never cared to be described as an anarchist anthropologist: "I see anarchism as something that you do, not an identity, so don't call me the anarchist anthropologist."

He attended local state schools before winning a place at what he called "a fancy boarding school", Phillips academy in Andover, Massachusetts. The scholarship came through some archaeologists discovering his precocious hobby of translating Mayan hieroglyphics.

His BA in anthropology from the State University of New York at Purchase (1984) led to his master's and doctorate at the University of Chicago. Ethnographic field research for 20 months in Betafo, in the Arivonimamo district of central Madagascar, resulted in his PhD thesis (1997), on a community divided between descendants of nobles and slaves. A decade later it resurfaced in the book Lost People: Magic and the Legacy of Slavery in Madagascar.

He taught at Chicago, New York University and ultimately at Yale, where he wrote Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value (2001), and a short book, Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology (2004), musing on why, apart from David Graeber, there were so few anarchists in the academy.

In 2004 Yale decided not to renew his contract. The university, he claimed, gave "no reason for its decision other than dissatisfaction with my scholarship, but some felt it may not have been entirely irrelevant that I was by this time quite active in the global justice movement and other anarchist-inspired projects". Asked if he would have got further at Yale if he had not been an anarchist, Graeber replied: "Maybe. I guess I had two strikes against me. One, I seemed to be enjoying my work too much. Plus I'm from the wrong class: I come from a working-class background."

After Yale, he claimed to find himself unemployable in the US, but in 2007 Goldsmiths, University of London, took him on, and in 2013 he became a full professor at the London School of Economics. It was in London that the exiled American wrote much of his best work, while still engaging in direct action.

His later books included Direct Action: An Ethnography (2013), a study of the global justice movement, which, he claimed, "hardly anyone ever reads" and Debt: The First 5000 Years, "which virtually everyone seems to have read". The Utopia of Rules (2015) argued that since the 70s there has been a shift from technologies based on realising alternative futures to investment technologies that favour

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labour discipline and social control. "The control is so ubiquitous that we don't see it. We don't see, either, how the threat of violence underpins society," he claimed. It was striking too that, while no cure has been found for cancer, the most dramatic medical breakthroughs have been with drugs such as Ritalin, Zoloft and Prozac that are "tailor-made, one might say, so that these new professional demands don't drive us completely, dysfunctionally, crazy".

In 2018 he wrote Bullshit Jobs: A Theory, arguing that most white-collar jobs were meaningless and that technological advances had led to people working more, not less. "Huge swathes of people, in Europe and North America in particular, spend their entire working lives performing tasks they believe to be unnecessary. The moral and spiritual damage that comes from this situation is profound. It is a scar across our collective soul. Yet virtually no one talks about it," he said. Did that imply, I asked him once, that his work was unnecessary. "There can be no objective measure of social value," he replied.

In 2019, he married Nika Dubrovsky, a Russian-born artist and blogger, saying disarmingly: "I have never been more moved than that someone who actually knows me would want to be with me for ever." The couple founded Yes Women, an art group that sought justice for ostracised women in the former East Germany.

Late last year, Graeber fell out with the Guardian, tweeting that he would never write for the paper again after its treatment of the then Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn, during the general election campaign. In particular he defended Corbyn against the charge that he was antisemitic. "If you look at the people who have left the party over antisemitism," he told an interviewer, "most of them weren't Jewish and a lot of the people who still remain close to Jeremy Corbyn are Jewish. It's absurd."

He remained a busy figure until he fell ill in Venice at the end of last month. At the time of his death he was working with the archaeologist David Wengrow on a series of works on the origins of social inequality. He had also been working with the Kurdish Freedom Movement.

Graeber described himself as an "eternal optimist" who hoped in 50 years a new system would be in place that was not capitalist. He wrote in Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology that "as the Brazilian folk song puts it, 'another world is possible'. That institutions like the state, capitalism, racism and male dominance are not inevitable; that it would be possible to have a world in which these things would not exist, and that we'd all be better off as a result."

He is survived by Nika.

Stuart Jeffries

David Rolfe Graeber, anthropologist and activist, born 12 February 1961; died 2 September 2020

Peter Graham

British chronicler of the culinary life of Mourjou, the French village in which he lived for four decades

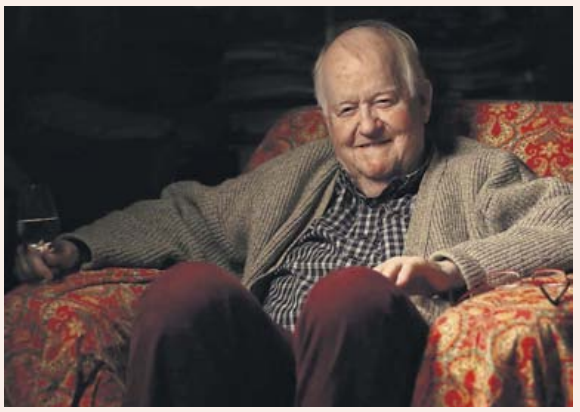
The most popular book written by the British food writer Peter Graham, who has died aged 80, was his last – an evocative account of the many meals he ate, and the many years he lived, in a small village in a quiet part of central France. Mourjou: The Life and Food of an Auvergne Village (1998) was suffused with a deep knowledge of France, and was every bit as seductive as the work of his more celebrated compatriot, Peter Mayle, author of A Year in Provence.

Mourjou is constructed category by category as a conventional cookery book, but you soon become aware that it is really an account of two decades of living in a shrinking village in the centre of France (down from 1,100 inhabitants in 1850 to 300 today). Peter was soon on visiting terms with many of his neighbours – visiting as in sharing their tables, experiencing quite surprising examples of Auvergnat cooking.

"I've got something for you," said Jeanne Chabut as he passed by her door one morning. The "something" was a plate of coagulated blood from a chicken she had just killed, mixed with chopped onions, which was to be fried, flipped over and fried again. "It was very tasty," he reports, "and had a curious, almost rubbery, texture reminiscent of overcooked *crème caramel*."

Not all his dishes are as outré, but they are studiously authentic and involved both plenty of local interaction and a determined sampling of virtually every proper restaurant within 20km. It is a book replete with local colour, served with gentle but consistent scholarship.

Peter's writing revealed a limitless enthusiasm for eating, a sensitive and intelligent palate, a wide base of reading and an enlightened curiosity about the meaning of the words used in French cooking – be they from French dialect, Occitan, Provençal or Ligurian Italian. His recipes, too, were eminently do-able, as he demonstrated in another well-received and enduring book, Classic Cheese Cookery (1988), which won the André Simon Memorial prize for the best food book of the year.



The chestnut museum, Mourjou, top, which was set up in a barn previously owned by Graham, above ALAMY; MIKE SMITH

'I've got something for you,' a neighbour said. It was a plate of coagulated blood from a chicken

Born in Newbury, Berkshire, Peter grew up in London, where his father, Richard Graham, was a copywriter and his mother, Anne (nee Scratchley), had been a ballet dancer. After attending University College school, Hampstead, he went to King's College, Cambridge, where he studied classics, was the editor of Granta (1961-62) and became a keen student film-maker.

Soon after university he moved to Paris, and he lived in France for the rest of his life. In his early days there he directed a couple of short films, Edith Piaf (1968) and Au Bout des Fusils (At Gunpoint, 1971), which depicted the slaughter of hand-reared pheasants in the Sologne region and was filmed by the Polish director Walerian Borowczyk.

However, Peter's career soon turned away from images to words: he began to teach English, did some translating, and wrote about film for English-language publications in France. His pamphlet The Abortive Renaissance, Why Are Good British Films So Bad? (1963) was followed by A Dictionary of the Cinema (1964) and a collection of essays he edited entitled The French New Wave, Critical Landmarks (1968).

By this time, Peter had begun to shift his interest from film to his other great love, food. He began writing about food and cookery for the International Herald Tribune, the Sunday Times and the Guardian during the 1970s, eventually editing the International Herald Tribune Guide to Business Travel and Entertainment and contributing large chunks of text to the American Express Pocket Guide to Paris. For Guardian Weekly Peter chose articles from Le Monde, and while the emphasis was on political coverage his enthusiasm for pieces about culture and the arts shone through.

After a long period of travelling and tasting, he decided to change the rhythm of his life by moving away from Paris and into deepest France. In 1978 he bought a former cafe and grocer's shop in Mourjou with a large enough room for his grand piano, harpsichord and euphonium (he was a talented musician as familiar with Scarlatti as Fats Waller).

From that base, and with the support of a welcoming village community, he began to pursue various food writing projects, beginning with a translation of a Jacques Médecin recipe book, Cuisine Niçoise: Recipes from a Mediterranean Kitchen (1983).

In 2004 I reissued his book on Mourjou at Prospect Books, and it remains in print. His writing was again acknowledged in 2019 with a prize for an article in a language other than French, organised by the state-funded tourist agency, Atout France. It was on stockfish, unsalted wind-dried cod.

As a measure of the respect and affection with which Peter was held in Mourjou, the locals, for whom the surrounding groves of chestnuts have been an important source of food for centuries, bestowed upon him the title of Grand Master of the Chestnut Confraternity. These days the nuts are the focus of green tourism, and the October chestnut festival brings thousands to the village.

A chestnut museum – the Maison de la Châtaigne – was created in a barn that once belonged to him, and he lived in the village for the rest of his life, with visiting friends finding a welcome table and a perceptive host.

He is survived by his sister Elizabeth, a niece, Sarah, and his nephews, Adrian and Siy.

Tom Jaine

Peter John Graham, author, born 8 December 1939; died 6 July 2020

Birthdays

Sir David Cannadine, historian and president, British Academy, 70; **Gerald Corbett**, chairman, the Marylebone Cricket Club, 69; **Jennifer Egan**, author, 58; **Angela Gheorghiu**, soprano, 55; **Peter Gill**, director and playwright, 81; **Lady (Dianne) Hayter of Kentish Town**, former chair, the Labour party, and shadow deputy leader of the House of Lords, 71; **Chrissie Hynde**, singer, 69; **Leslie Jones**, comedian and actor, 53; **Toby Jones**, actor, 54; **Julie Kavner**, actor, 70; **Commodore Inga Kennedy**, head of the Royal Naval Medical Service, 58; **Martin Kettle**, journalist, 71; **Prof Sir Curtis Price**, musicologist and former warden, New College, Oxford, 75; **Lord (Robert) Reed of Allermuir**, president of the supreme court, 64; **Sonny Rollins**, jazz saxophonist, 90; **Alok Sharma**, Conservative MP and business secretary, 53; **Lord (Andrew) Stone of Blackheath**, former joint managing director, Marks & Spencer, 78; **Jean-Yves Thibaudet**, pianist, 59; **Chris Wright**, co-founder, the Chrysalis Group, 76; **Vera Zvonareva**, tennis player, 36.

Saturday's solutions

Sandwich sudoku

6	1	3	8	5	4	2	9	7	22
7	8	2	9	1	3	4	5	6	0
4	9	5	2	7	6	8	3	1	31
2	6	4	5	3	8	7	1	9	0
9	5	1	7	4	2	3	6	8	5
8	3	7	1	6	9	5	2	4	6
5	4	6	3	8	1	9	7	2	0
1	7	9	4	2	5	6	8	3	7
3	2	8	6	9	7	1	4	5	7
13	8	13	14	30	0	6	8	0	

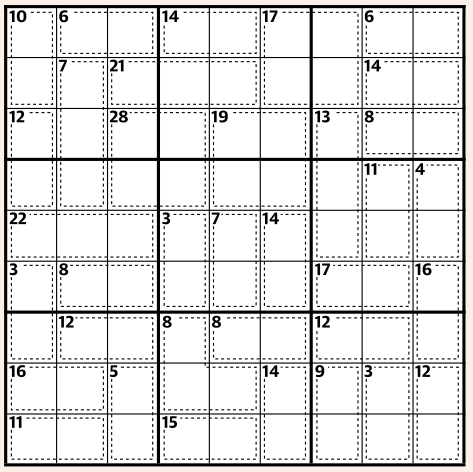
Killer Sudoku 726

2	5	1	9	8	7	3	4	6
3	6	8	2	4	1	7	5	9
9	7	4	5	6	3	8	1	2
8	1	9	6	2	5	4	7	3
7	4	6	1	3	8	9	2	5
5	3	2	4	7	9	1	6	8
4	2	7	8	9	6	5	3	1
6	8	5	3	1	4	2	9	7
1	9	3	7	5	2	6	8	4

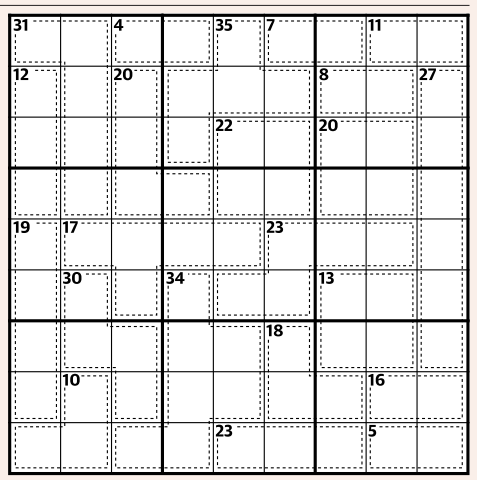
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of Sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.



Medium



Codeword

Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.

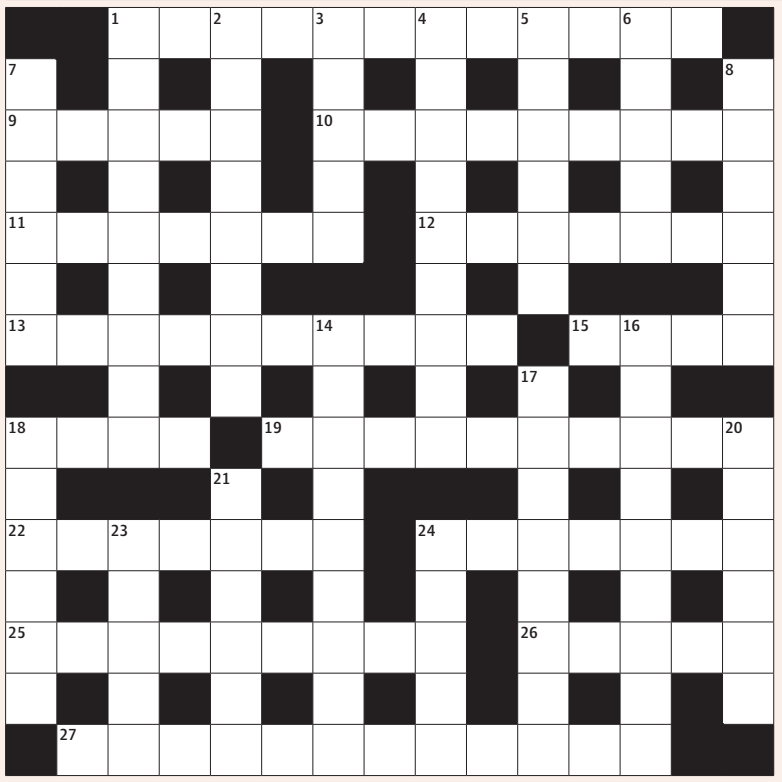
8	4	23	25	25	■	1	23	11	1	3	22	14
4	■	1	■	4	■	3	■	23	■	10	■	23
3	16	3	1	2	5	17	■	24	5	25	9	15
6	■	■	■	19	■	20	■	25	■	■	■	14
16	3	24	19	6	16	■	7	9	16	20	3	6
14	■	3	■	25	■	20	■	17	■	8	■	25
■	23	11 D	11	17	6	16	12	■	26	4	14	23
2	■	11	■	■	■	23	■	■	■	3	■	20
1	23	6	16	■	5	3	24	24	6	25	17	■
9	■	16	■	25	■	19	■	23	■	25	■	20
20	6	12	16	23	11	■	2	1	3	17 Y	9	16
20	■	■	■	20	■	3	■	22	■	■	■	4
7	9	1	23	20	■	7	9	9	21	6	16	12
9	■	23	■	23	■	4	■	1	■	14	■	25
10	3	18	6	23	20	14	■	13	4	20	19	17

A B C Ø E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 D	12	13
14	15	16	17 Y	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword

No 28,232 set by Vulcan



Across

1 Perform decisively in shabby affair (4,8)
9 Nothing to salute in officers' camp? (5)
10 Fine clues sold for a pound (9)
11 Desperately anxious, pointing cryptically to knee? (3,4)
12 Poacher in river or lake breaking heart (7)
13 Around Stoke, nasty trace from this source of industrial pollution (10)
15 Cautious and tired, losing energy (4)
18 Responsibility for tax (4)
19 Brief topic set out in cable (5,5)
22 Female, a gem that cheat pulls (4,3)
24 A class act (7)
25 Offer by Conservative candidate (9)
26 Don't insist on greeting being heard (5)
27 Flyer, insured for a crash, works easily (4-8)

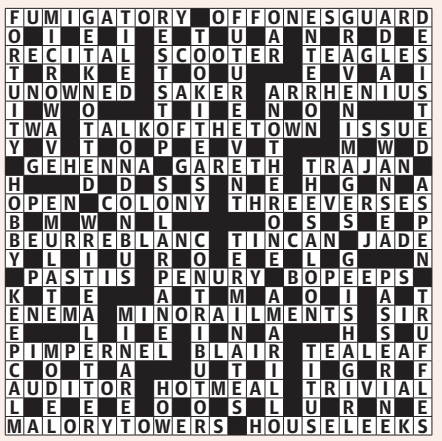
Down

1 Clumsy admiral to get transferred (9)
2 Fish certainly around island (8)
3 Forbid eating firm meat (5)
4 Zippy little number to bear evidence of damage (6,3)
5 Indicate agreement with reserve, there's nothing doing (2,4)
6 Period charm (5)
7 World of society in care of doctors (6)
8 For one fishing, nothing right in salmon river (6)
14 Rabbit hoping to avoid duck? (4-5)
16 Writer on computer matters, unknown expert (9)
17 Men supporting bachelor disputed something for wedding? (8)
18 Spoil appearance of part of the cafe, disabled needing a lift (6)
20 Slicing tops off salad plant is burden (6)
21 Put a fold in party clothes (3-3)
23 Partly fills in useless hole in the head (5)
24 Contract is in wallet (5)

Cryptic crossword August bank holiday special

Solution No. 28,225

We regret that in the present circumstances we are unable to process prize entries for this puzzle.



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